



No. CCLI.]	Contents	[SEPTEMBER 1903
		PAGE
Christian Thal (<i>concluded</i>)		385
By M. E. FRANCIS (Mrs. Francis Blundell)		
Canada in the Sixties.—II. A Journey to the Red River		407
By PAUL FOUNTAIN		
Why Old Jackalse Danced the War-dance		421
By O. R.		
The Stricken Field of Newbury		431
By G. A. B. DEWAR		
Boxer		438
By KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN		
Badgers and their Ways		444
By H. A. BRYDEN		
Nature's Comedian. Chapters V., VI.		454
By W. E. NORRIS		
At the Sign of the Ship		472
By ANDREW LANG		

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER 1903.

*Christian Thal.*¹

BY M. E. FRANCIS.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VI.



IT was the day of Christian Thal's recital. The great hall was filled—more than filled, densely packed from floor to ceiling. There was not even standing room in the galleries. Juliet sat almost preternaturally still, her heart beating tumultuously, her face white. The platform on which Christian must presently

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appear seemed to swim before her eyes; she felt rather than saw the great concourse of people. Her father, conscious of her natural agitation, though not fully aware of its extent, endeavoured to distract her mind during the period of waiting by calling her attention to this or that personage of interest.

'It is not merely a fashionable assemblage,' he said; 'your friend seems to draw notabilities of many kinds, and particularly musicians. Surely that is — the violinist; and those are two remarkable heads up there to the right of the balcony. Look!'

Juliet raised her eyes to the spot indicated, and a little colour came to her cheeks.

'Those are two of Professor Adlersohn's former pupils,' she cried. 'I remember their faces quite well. I heard them play at his class at Stättingen. I suppose all the members of the school in London are anxious to hear Cæsar, as they used to call him.'

'Ah! ah! Cæsar?' said her father.

'Yes; it was a name they gave him because of his ambition,' she returned with a little laugh. 'He always vowed he would vanquish the universe.'

Her father glanced once more round the hall.

'Well, his prophecy already seems likely to be verified,' he said.

At this moment enthusiastic applause announced that Christian had stepped forth upon the platform.

Juliet drew a long breath, and as he came forward, bowing gravely, tried to fancy what impression he was likely to produce upon such units of the vast crowd as then beheld him for the first time. To her he was Christian—her Christian, the first among men, inexpressibly beloved; his face, his gait, every little trick of manner, dear to her because a part of himself. How did he strike others? Surely everyone must see how noble he was, how graceful, how dignified! It seemed to her, indeed, as he faced the crowd that day, that he possessed a certain majesty of bearing which even she had never before noticed. What was it her cousin had said? 'He seems to be miles and miles above one.' And what was that bygone boast of his in his boyish days? 'I never find myself in the midst of a crowd without feeling that I have the power to dominate it.' Well, he dominated this vast concourse to-day; he was already its master. The magnetic force of his personality swayed it before he had so much as laid his fingers upon the keys.

He stood for a moment viewing the sea of faces, and listening to the tumultuous applause, as a man might stand upon the shore watching the incoming waves and hearkening to the roar of them, to all intents and purposes alone. He was alone, alone with his art—that art which would presently unfold, uplift him, and with him the listening throng around. Yet not entirely alone, for even as he turned towards his piano he cast one swift look along the row of stalls where Juliet sat, and their eyes met; and she knew that he took the thought of her with him. When he played she felt as though her spirit was being drawn forth from her body and wafted with his on those exquisite sounds up, up to the high regions where all was beauty and peace.

Suddenly a thunder of applause rent the air, and she came down to earth again, to find Christian once more bowing to the audience and her father wiping his eyes.

‘He is a wonder,’ he said—‘great man—a genius indeed.’

Juliet smiled faintly. Had she not always known it?

And now he was playing again, and once more her soul was drawn to his, and it seemed to her that they communed at ease, they two alone; he was putting his love into definite form, telling her all about it, now with sweet iteration, now introducing some subtle exquisite change.

And again there was silence, and then once more a tumult of enthusiasm.

‘Ten minutes’ interval,’ said the Professor, looking down at his programme; ‘shall we go into the Artist’s Room?’

‘No, Daddy; I couldn’t,’ said she.

He looked down at her quickly.

‘It has been almost too much for you,’ he said. ‘Well, little girl, let me tell you that even I feel proud to-day—for your sake. I have never heard such music; he is like no one else.’

Juliet smiled again; of course he was like no one else. Oh! she was proud, not of his triumph, but of *him*, of himself; of the mind that could conceive such beauty, of the hands that could interpret it—of, above all, the heart which she seemed to hear pulsing through every gradation of sound, ever repeating the refrain meant for her alone—‘*My soul is yours, my soul is yours.*’

Her very stillness and silence caused curious glances to be turned upon her, and she, becoming suddenly aware of them, cast down her eyes, lest they should betray her blissful secret.

A programme lay open on her lap, the words dancing before her gaze: Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann. What did it matter

whose music he played, she thought to herself. He made of it what he would.

It was over at last; even the ovation which had greeted Christian at the conclusion had come to an end, and Juliet stumbled out with the rest, clinging to her father's arm.

They had reached the air, found their carriage, and proceeded for some way on their homeward journey, before the Professor spoke.

Leaning forward, and looking at Juliet with dreamy eyes, he murmured very softly :

‘ I will come to the visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man . . . (whether in the body I know not, or out of the body I know not : God knoweth) such an one rapt even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell : God knoweth). That he was caught up into Paradise, and heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter——’

He broke off, smiling.

‘ I thought of this several times while Christian was playing, yet it is not entirely appropriate. He hears the words, indeed, but it is granted to him also to utter them.’

CHAPTER VII.

Why must I . . . give all to thee, O

where . . . fore

JULIET came down to breakfast pale after a sleepless night: one of those 'white nights' which had been frequent with her of late, and during which she had lain awake from pure bliss. She scarcely felt weary, so great was her exaltation of spirit; she would even have been reluctant to spend in oblivion so many moments better employed in dwelling on the events of the previous day. Every doubt seemed now set at rest, every fear done away with. Lest anything might have been wanting to complete the happiness of this day of days, Christian had come in for a few moments just before bedtime, exhausted, but supremely content. They must have another holiday, he said; he would come in good time on the morrow to take her out.

'Now he will speak,' Juliet said to herself over and over again in the night. 'The time has come at last; he will surely speak now.'

Small wonder that she had longed for the coming of the dawn.

Punctual though she was, she found the Professor already

installed at the breakfast-table, for he had, as he explained, important work to do that morning, and intended to betake himself as soon as might be to the British Museum.

'I, too, am going out,' said Juliet with a smile. 'Christian is coming early to take me to Kensington Gardens.'

'Aha!' said Mr. Lennox, with a laugh and a shrug of the shoulders; 'you are very unconventional, you two young folk, but I suppose your little affairs are practically settled. By the way, here is a letter which concerns you more than me. It is from Bulkeley. It seems news of your engagement has already reached Stättingen, and the good people there are on tiptoe with excitement.'

'My engagement!' exclaimed Juliet, and stopped short with a conscious little laugh.

'You think the announcement is rather premature,' returned her father. 'That is the penalty, you see, one pays for associating oneself with great men like your Christian, but it matters very little after all. There! read it for yourself.'

He propped up the 'Times' in front of his plate, according to his custom, leaving his daughter free to peruse the letter which he had tossed across the table.

To anyone less single-minded than Juliet Horace Bulkeley's letter would have appeared constrained, and not altogether devoid of sadness; but as she had never been conscious of the tender admiration he felt for her, which would, had he dared, have ripened into something warmer, she merely took note of the contents of the missive without paying any heed to the mental attitude of the writer. She uttered little exclamations every now and then, which somewhat interrupted the Professor in the assimilation of his leader, and he looked up with a smile or a nod or a brief response, and immediately became absorbed again.

Thus: 'So it was the Countess de Galphi after all!' Juliet cried on one occasion; and again, 'How their tongues must have wagged at that tea-party!' And once, with something akin to petulance, 'I wish people would not discuss one's private affairs.'

When she reached the fourth page of the letter, however, her face changed. 'So Annola Istó was there. Well, Daddy, you have news of her at last.'

Mr. Lennox looked up, giving Juliet all his attention this time.

'Yes, I was glad to hear she was well,' he said. 'I am not quite satisfied with Christian's attitude towards her. You see, Horace says she complains of his not having written for weeks. She actually declares that her last letters to him have been returned to her through the post; he has not even the civility to inform her of his whereabouts. I cannot but think this wrong, my dear. You should take him to task for it.'

Juliet turned to the letter again.

'I wish Mr. Bulkeley had not given her my address,' she murmured. 'She says she is going to write to me. I—I—she—oh! I wish she wouldn't write to me. She will only say disagreeable things. She will only try to come between us.'

The Professor folded up his newspaper and took off his spectacles.

'You should not rush to conclusions, child,' he said, almost severely. 'You are unduly prejudiced against a very attractive and intellectual woman. Fräulein Istó could have no possible motive for wishing to interfere between you and her friend now. His position is made; his training is complete; he may consider himself independent of her, though motives of gratitude and delicacy should naturally cause him to consult her before undertaking any great change in his life. It should do so, I say,' he added in a more indulgent tone and relaxing into a smile; 'but young men are hot-headed, and I daresay there is a certain pardonable sense of irritation, I might even say resentment, lingering in his mind when he recalls her former conduct. Events have proved, my dear Juliet, that her action in this matter has had the very best results. Some day you will probably confess as much, though I suppose it would be too much to expect of you or your Christian just yet. Take my advice, Baby, and be generous to that poor woman, both of you. After all, she grudged no personal sacrifice for the benefit of Christian's career. Now I'm going to my Museum. You can, if you like, pass on some of my sage counsels to the young man when he arrives.'

He gathered up his letters as he spoke, and as he did so caught sight of an unopened newspaper lying amid the pile beside his plate.

'This is directed to you, I see,' he said; 'take it up with you, child. It is a German paper, I believe. Yes, here is the Stättingen postmark. Perhaps Bulkeley sent it you. Well, I haven't time to wait till you open it. Take it up with you.'

Juliet went upstairs, examining the wrapper as she went. It

was directed in the regular pointed hand common to those who habitually employ German characters; the writing told her nothing; she might have seen it before or she might not.

She went into the drawing-room, where a flood of sunshine greeted her, the fresh breeze making the curtains wave as she opened the door. Through the French window the flower-bedecked balcony showed bravely bright; the room itself was full of delicate flower scents. Juliet glanced round. Christian would soon be here now; it was well to ascertain that all about her was at its best. She pushed forward a chair, moved a vase or two of flowers, and opened the piano; then, as she sat down leisurely in her accustomed place near the instrument, she stripped off the wrapper from the newspaper.

It was a small sheet of familiar aspect—a copy, in fact, of a certain journal to which Countess de Galphi had regularly subscribed during her stay at Stättingen, and which had been much beloved by that lady, for it was its custom to supplement its Fashionable Intelligence with various delectable items of local gossip.

The paper which Juliet held was folded in the middle and marked in one place with two large crosses in red ink. She read the title at a glance—'Romance of a Musician'—and crushed up the paper, reddening and biting her lip.

It had got into print already. How dared they? How dared they before Christian himself had torn apart the veil of silence which shrouded this most sacred and most intimate secret? Their love-tale had not yet been fully told—and here it was blazoned forth in print!

She smoothed out the paper and again sought the place, her breath coming quickly, her cheeks burning. All at once her eyes dilated, and she gazed at the paragraph as though fascinated, the colour ebbing from her face as quickly as it had come.

What was this? What could this mean?—

'It may interest all admirers of the talented artist, Mr. Christian Thal, to learn one of the most romantic episodes in a very romantic career. This, perhaps, most celebrated of Professor Adlersohn's pupils, who at the age of five-and-twenty finds himself already on the pinnacle of fame, has been married for some years to an interesting and remarkable lady well known in Stättingen. The marriage, for reasons best known to the contracting parties, has been kept secret till the present time; but now that the young musician occupies so prominent a place in the eyes of the world it

would be manifestly unfair to withhold from the public such an important fact in the life of one in whom it takes so great an interest.'

Juliet fell back in her chair, dropping the paper from her hand, pallid, motionless, stunned. Her eyes, dark under her gathered brows, looked forth blankly.

'I shall understand soon,' she said to herself; 'I shall know soon what it means.'

At that moment she felt nothing but a sort of dim surprise, such as might befit one recovering from an anæsthetic and finding himself stretched on the operating-table. Soon consciousness would come, and with it overwhelming pain.

Still gazing before her with those dazed eyes she saw the door open and Christian entering the room.

He uttered an exclamation at sight of her, and hurried towards her; and, moving one numb hand with immense difficulty, she pointed to the paper.

He stooped and picked up, not the paper, but the wrapper.

'Annola sent you this!' he cried.

So it was Annola, thought Juliet; then she once more designated the journal.

He snatched it from the floor, and walked with it nearer the window, though, indeed, the room was flooded with light. Juliet turned her head a little so as to follow him with her eyes, and saw that his hand shook.

After what seemed to be an interval of a thousand years he flung the paper on the floor and came towards her.

'Juliet!'

Her eyes were still fixed on his face, but she did not speak.

'Have you nothing to say to me, Juliet?'

He stretched out his hand, and she, rousing herself suddenly, caught it in both hers and turned it over; then she raised her anguished eyes to his face, and said hoarsely, with a twitching lip:

'Christian, why do you not wear your wedding-ring?'

He had become white to the lips, but returned her gaze steadily.

'You have heard my reason,' he answered. 'I do not choose to be reminded of my chain.'

The clutch of the little ice-cold hands relaxed; he drew away his own, and looked at it, and then let it drop.

Juliet had fallen back in her chair once more, being, indeed, too weak and dizzy to sustain herself. Her eyes still looked

questioningly into his—questioningly, but not incredulously. She knew now; she was beginning to understand

He bent over her suddenly, maddened by their dumb pain.

‘Why do you not speak?’ he cried; ‘why do you not reproach me?’

She did not answer except by a gentle shake of her head; and he, with a groan, stooped over her lower still—he would have kissed her, but that with a cry she pressed both her hands against his breast, endeavouring with all her strength to push him from her.

‘Ah!’ he cried, starting back, ‘you love me no more! You love me no more!’

‘Oh, Christian!’ she said with a sob, ‘indeed it is not because I do not love you.’

He made no attempt to approach her again, but sank down on the music-seat, covering his face with his hands. After a moment Juliet rallied herself and sat up.

‘You must tell me about it,’ she said.

He turned round so as to face her, his eyes not meeting hers, however, but bent upon the ground. He was as pale as she and beads of anguish stood upon his brow.

‘It was two years after you left me. At my first concert at Stättingen—it was a triumph they said—she was standing in the doorway, and I saw the tears pouring down her face. You know I owed her everything. I thought my success would have repaid her, but it was not enough; I looked in her face and saw that it was not enough. I had never imagined such a thing before, but when I saw—— Oh! I don’t know why I did it; I was excited, overstrung; it seemed to me that her claim was paramount—and you had gone away.’

‘I see,’ said Juliet; ‘I understand.’

‘She wished it kept secret,’ he went on, ‘and I—I did not care. No one guessed—we had always been together, you see. It is she, of course, who has put this announcement in the paper.’

Silence fell between them.

He could not look at her, and after a moment, heaving a deep sigh, turned round upon the music-stool and let his hands wander absently over the notes. Juliet leaned forward, plucking at his arm:

‘Not to-day, Christian; do not play to-day.’

He broke off, looking round at her with a frown; then suddenly, turning to the piano again, brought down his hands upon the keys

once more with a crash, and the opening notes of the 'Storm Study' came thundering out.

'No, Christian, no!' cried Juliet, almost with a wail. 'Not that. I cannot bear it.'

He paid no heed to her, but played on like one possessed, filling the room with a very tempest of sound. Another tempest raged within the souls of both. Juliet started up at length, dragging his hand from the keys; and he too sprang to his feet. His face was convulsed. For a moment they stood still, gazing at each other with terrified eyes.

Presently, with a gasp, Juliet pointed to the door.

'You must go,' she whispered.

'Oh, what folly!' he cried. 'We cannot part—you know that we cannot part. We must never part again.'

He caught her hands, and they fluttered in his grasp like imprisoned birds.

'Destiny is too strong for us,' he cried hoarsely. 'It has driven us together. You are mine, and I am yours. You know you cannot live without me.'

'Yes, I can live without you,' she said, and with a supreme effort she loosed her hands. 'With God's help I will never see you again.'

He fell upon his knees at her feet, clutching her dress, kissing it, pouring forth broken words; but she stooped and gently strove to disengage herself.

Looking up pleadingly he saw the despair in her eyes.

'How will you bear it?' he gasped; 'if you drive me from you, how will you bear it, Juliet?'

He caught her hand again, and for a moment she let it rest in his, a tremor passing over her frame. Then she braced herself and looked down at him bravely.

'I can bear it,' she said; 'I will bear it. There is only one thing I could not bear—that you should—that you should fail. I think that would kill me.'

'But I want you,' he cried; 'I only want you—I want nothing but you in the world.'

'But I want more—oh! much more—for you. I will not have you untrue to yourself. You—you are more to me than our love. Oh, I am so little, and you are so great. I will not have you cast away your greatness.'

He pressed his burning lips to her hand, and then lifted up his head, his eyes catching something of the inspired light in hers.

'Christian,' she went on earnestly, 'Christian, remember the Edelweiss! Never forget the Edelweiss!'

He loosed her hand and stood up: 'My soul is yours,' he said slowly; 'you shall do with it what you will.'

Their eyes met, and she saw that his were dim.

'It is you who are my Edelweiss,' he said falteringly. 'My white flower, I will leave you in your snows.'

And Juliet realised with an exceedingly bitter pang that she had conquered.

Professor Lennox thought the room was empty when he opened the door, but soon caught sight of Juliet crouching in her chair.

'Ah, you have come home, I see. Has our friend gone already? I thought he would have stayed to-day, perhaps, and played to me. To-morrow—to-morrow I must hear him—— You look very white, my dear'—coming nearer to her; 'you have overtired yourself, I fear.'

'Christian will not come to-morrow,' said Juliet in a faint voice. 'Oh, Daddy, he will never come again! I told him not to come again. He is married!'

'Married!' cried her father, with flashing eyes, while the colour rushed to his face. 'Married! Then how did he dare——'

'Oh! don't, please,' said Juliet feebly. 'I—I—I suppose there are no such things as broken hearts, but I feel as if mine were broken.'

The Professor's own heart was hot within him, yet the sight of her grief-stricken face caused him to choke down his wrath and to turn his attention to the task of consoling this cherished child. Many a wise saying fell from his lips that day, many a telling aphorism; many a favourite theory, often meditated on and appreciated by himself, was brought to light for his daughter's benefit, his eyes scanning her face the while with the most acute anxiety.

'Do I help you at all?' he asked all at once.

'No,' said Juliet with an irrepressible sob.

And then he went down stiffly on his knees beside her chair and took her in his arms, fondling her with tender, incoherent words: 'My little bird—my darling—my poor Baby!'

'That helps me,' she said, and clasped her hands about his neck with a passion of tears.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.



‘AH, Monsieur Michotte! Charmed to see you. My husband has not yet appeared, but he will not be long now. He generally works till dinner-time.’

Bobodropped the hand which he had been holding with a little laugh. ‘What a contrast, madame, hein? What a contrast to the old times!’

He glanced round the luxurious room. Christian Thal’s Paris home wanted, indeed, nothing that artistic taste could devise or money procure. Annola herself, in a handsome dress carelessly put on, looked out of place as its presiding goddess. She had aged much of late; her sallow face was pinched and drawn, and her manner was more restless than ever.

She threw herself into a chair now, with a laugh which was not so pleasant to hear as Michotte’s naively delighted one of a moment before.

‘What a fortunate woman I am, monsieur, am I not? I have everything that the heart can desire—wealth, luxury, health. I shall live for ever, monsieur, I tell you that.’ Here those unquiet eyes of her gleamed. ‘Honour—yes. I have even a vicarious share in my husband’s fame. The world knows, do you see, that it is to me he owes a measure of his greatness. Ah! I assure you I am to be envied.’

Bobo shot a keen glance at her from beneath his shaggy brows and nodded. He was never at ease in the presence of this woman, and to-day she made him feel more uncomfortable than ever.

‘You have every reason to be proud of your husband,’ he said

gravely after a pause. 'What a man! Ah, what a man! Madame, I swear to you that each time I hear him I am filled with fresh wonder—I, even *I*, his old comrade, who have heard him so often in the School. I tell you, madame, every artist owes him a debt of gratitude. Here in this decadent age, when Art itself has become debased and debauched, he has uplifted it, breathed into it a new spirit—become, in a word, an Apostle—the Apostle of Music. There! do you see, I can hardly speak of it—I am carried away by enthusiasm.'

'So I perceive,' said Madame Thal drily; adding, with an undisguised sneer, 'you would agree, without doubt, with the writer in the "Guide Musical," who declares that one might imagine oneself listening to the playing of an angel.'

'Not at all,' returned Bobo hotly. 'An angel? Nothing of the sort! Christian's playing is distinctly human; it is even passionate, but with a spiritualised passion that has in it something divine.'

Annola sat upright, flashing a strange look at him.

'And what is my part in all this?' she asked.

'Your part?' he stammered.

'I ask you, what is my part? Since he would not have been a musician at all without me, I must perforce have a share of his great work. There, do not trouble yourself to answer me—you are not one of those who lie with ease. To change the subject, I believe there is a telegram waiting here for you.'

'A telegram!' ejaculated Bobo, his face lighting up. 'It must be from my adored one. De grâce, madame, let me see it.'

Annola rose and crossed the room to the chimney-piece, from which she took the despatch in question.

Michotte tore it open, reading half-aloud. "'All well; a thousand kisses." Ah! my little Jeanne.'

He pressed the paper to his lips.

Annola burst out laughing.

'You carry sentiment a little too far, my friend. Are you aware that you are kissing the words scrawled by some poor devil of a telegraph clerk?'

'Madame,' returned Bobo, whose face was still radiant, 'it matters to me little by whom the words were written. It is the thought that I embrace—the thought of her. I will pay, from this distance, homage to the affection which prompted the message. It is the first time we have been separated, you see. I could give her no indication of where I should be staying

to-night, but she knew that I should hasten to see Christian, and so the blessed little woman sends the greeting to me here.'

'Ah! so you have never been separated,' said Annola carelessly. 'Does Madame Michotte accompany you, then, when you go on tour?'

'Hitherto, madame, she has done so,' he returned, with a sigh; 'but henceforth I fear it will be impossible. We have now three children. The mother naturally could not leave her little ones, and, on the other hand, it would be difficult to travel with such a family. Alas! I and my cherished one must in future submit to periodical partings.'

'So much the better for your art,' returned Annola sharply. 'Do you think I accompany my husband when he travels? Never! From the first I told him I should not expect it.'

Bobo bowed with an embarrassed look. It seemed to him that the cases were not parallel.

'So you have three children now,' she went on, taking up the conversation at a fresh point, as the pause threatened to become wearisome. 'How old are they, if one may ask?'

'Madame, our eldest boy is two years and eleven months old, and the youngest is six weeks. Between them comes our little girl—our little angel, Juliette.'

'Ah!'

A kind of convulsion passed over Annola's face, and she fell into a moody silence until the entrance of Christian some minutes later.

The four years which had elapsed since his parting from Juliet had given him additional dignity of bearing. The lines of his face were stronger—it was less mobile than of old, but was composed, even placid in expression. The man had learnt to hide his thoughts. His face lit up, however, as he grasped his friend's hand, and he asked him many questions eagerly and rapidly with regard to himself, his family and his work, all of which Bobo answered enthusiastically. Presently dinner was announced, and Michotte, giving his arm to his hostess, conducted her to the dining-room.

Bobo talked incessantly during the ensuing repast, being conscious, nevertheless, of an increasing sense of constraint. Annola was so silent, so restless, eating little, but fidgeting perpetually. Her dark eyes, as they wandered from him to her husband, had an unusual gleam in them, and her face was flushed.

'Here sits the most miserable woman in the world,' thought Bobo; 'and yet is not her life as she has made it?'

Presently, in giving an account of his experiences, Michotte chanced to mention that he had recently been to London, bringing out the announcement with some difficulty, and feeling, rather than seeing, the effect produced on both husband and wife. There was a momentary pause before Christian responded, very quietly, that he had no doubt his friend had been well received in a city where music was so much beloved. During that pause he had fixed his eyes questioningly on the other's face, and Annola, leaning forward in her chair, had uttered a smothered exclamation.

'Ma foi! one lives here on the edge of a volcano,' was Bobo's mental comment, and he hastened to pass to a less disquieting subject.

At the conclusion of this very uncomfortable meal, Christian, rising, came round the table and tapped his old comrade on the shoulder.

'Now, my friend, you come upstairs with me. I will show you my atelier—it is a real workshop; and you must play to me. It will be good to hear you play again.'

'I play to *you*? What a farce, my dear fellow! But I will do it—it will bring back the old days.'

They went upstairs together to a large room at the top of the house—a studio, built by some former occupant. In one corner of it stood Christian's grand piano. The vast room was almost bare of furniture, its simplicity contrasting with the evidences of luxury perceptible in every other part of the house.

'One breathes more freely here,' exclaimed Bobo involuntarily.

There was a lamp on the centre table, and the light, though it failed to penetrate to the farther corners of the room, fell full upon Christian's face as he sank into a chair beside it.

Bobo drew up another close to him, and, leaning forward, tapped him lightly on the knee.

'Christian! I have seen her.'

'Ah!' said Christian. He turned a little way from his friend and leaned his elbows on the table, shading his eyes with his hands; but Bobo from where he sat could see the lower part of his face, and noted a momentary quiver of the lips. After a pause—

'Is she well?' asked Christian.

'She is well,' responded Michotte, adding, after another silence, 'for the rest, she is—as always.'

His eyes sought Thal's face once more, but this time the lips told no tale.

'I spoke to her of you,' went on Michotte presently. 'I told her of your work, and how nobly you were fulfilling your mission; of how you had revolutionised the world of music, uplifting your hearers, and convincing them that the best and most beautiful in Art, as in life, is the highest and the purest.'

Christian dropped his hands and turned round with a long sigh.

'Ah! my friend,' he was beginning, but broke off, adding after a moment, 'But she—what did she say?'

Bobo's voice shook a little as he answered:

'She said, "His feet are on the mountain-tops." Ah! Christian, if you could have seen her! Her eyes were full of tears, and yet I swear to you there was joy in her face—such joy as might be found among the angels.'

Christian rose and began to pace up and down the room. 'The mountain-tops,' he repeated, half to himself; 'yes, Bobo, yes, it is her wish that I should climb, but the heights are very lonely.'

'My poor friend!' cried Bobo, rising, and catching him by the hand. 'The heights! Do I not remember how she always longed that you should reach them? Was it not I that brought you the Edelweiss that day so many years ago? Yes, yes, I did not understand it then, but I do now.' He wrung Christian's hand again, and would have said more, but that at that moment the door was thrown open and Annola appeared, holding up one corner of the heavy portière.

'Well, Monsieur Michotte, are you not going to play?' she cried harshly.

'Ah! madame, how you startled me! I did not hear you approach; that great curtain seems to shut out all sound.'

'It is intended to shut in sound,' said Christian in a curiously constrained voice. 'My wife, do you see, is sometimes wearied by the sound of my piano.'

'Then certainly I had better not inflict my music on her,' returned Bobo with a clumsy attempt at a joke to conceal his shocked surprise.

Annola, without replying, made an imperious motion towards the piano, and flung herself into the chair which he had vacated. At the close of his first piece, however, she rose abruptly and went out of the room.

Neither of the men made any comment upon her sudden
VOL. XLII. NO. CCLI.

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departure, neither did they resume the conversation which had been interrupted by her entrance.

It was late when Bobo took his leave, but Christian remained brooding in his upper room for long after he had left.

It was past one o'clock, indeed, when the curtain was once more lifted and the figure of his wife appeared, still in her evening dress, and carrying a bedroom candlestick.

She set this down upon the table, and walked close up to her husband.

'Are you going to remain here all night?'

He started up angrily, closing his hand hastily over some small object which had been lying before him on the table.

'Annola, this is too much,' he cried. 'There are times when I must have privacy.'

'Oh, of course!' she returned, almost hissing the words; 'it is I—I, the wife, who am the intruder. You wish to be alone, I suppose, that you may brood over that cursed Edelweiss.'

He made an indescribable gesture that was at once appealing and dignified; one would have said that he was enfolding himself in a mantle of reserve. But she went on, with heightening passion:

'The Edelweiss! the Edelweiss! Do you think I did not guess why it was you carry it about you day and night? I guessed—and I know now. *In excelsis*—to the heights!'—bursting into a peal of hysterical laughter. 'Ah! it is she who makes you climb, is it? And I—what do I do?'

He turned upon her almost savagely.

'Do not tempt me,' he exclaimed. 'Do not make me say that which neither of us can ever forget.'

'Do you think I will endure it?' she shrieked. 'I tell you my life is a hell: to be here beside you, always looking upon your face, always hearing your voice, and to know that we are as far asunder as the poles; to know that I am nothing to you—nothing—worse than nothing—an encumbrance, a burden to be endured, while in your heart of hearts there is an inner shrine, consecrated to the thought of her.'

'Annola, I beseech of you,' he cried brokenly.

But she cut him short excitedly:

'But I will live—I will live, if only to keep you apart. If misery could have killed I should have been in my grave years ago; yet you still see me here. I tell you I will not die. I tell you——'

'Hush! there must be no more of this,' he said. 'I at least will not stay to hear you.'

He turned quickly, and she, throwing herself across the table, caught him by the sleeve. He looked round with an impatient movement, but even as he did so he uttered a cry. In her passionate eagerness to detain him she had taken no heed of the lighted candle on the table, and the gauze draperies of her dress were on fire. In a moment she was wreathed in flames, her face, still distorted by fury, looking out from the midst of them with most terrible effect. As he stood transfixed with horror she rushed from him, screaming.

'Throw yourself down!' he cried, recovering his presence of mind. 'Throw yourself upon the ground, Annola—it is the only chance! My God, there is not even a carpet here! Ah, the portière!'

A violent wrench from his frenzied hands brought it down, and he rushed towards her, holding up the heavy fabric, and calling to her imploringly to be still. She turned towards him, a frightful spectacle, her dress already reduced to tinder, her very hair aflame, her eyes glaring at him from her tortured face.

'Let me burn!' she cried savagely; 'let me burn, and you will be rid of me!'

He threw himself upon her, his weight carrying her to the floor, and wrapped the plush folds closely about her, pressing out the flames with feverish anxiety. Suddenly, with a shriek of such anguish as her own extremity had not wrung from her, she cried:

'Your hands, Christian! For God's sake remember your hands!'

'Do you think I will see you burn to death before my eyes?' returned he, clasping her more closely still.

'Your hands,' she repeated, her voice sinking to a moan, 'your precious hands! Oh, Christian! let me die.'

She struggled in his arms, but her efforts quickly became faint, and when Christian relaxed his embrace he found that she was unconscious.

CHAPTER II.



WHEN Annola came to herself, some hours later, she saw Christian sitting by the side of her bed, gazing at her sorrowfully. Her eyes—the only living things about her, as it seemed—sought first his face, and then glanced at her own swathed, inert limbs.

‘This is death, I suppose,’ she said.

He bowed his head.

‘Oh, Christian!’ she said, with a little gasp, ‘would that I had died last night with your arms about me, and the knowledge in my heart that you were thinking of me!—last night, when you risked what is more precious to you than life for my sake! Christian, your hands?’

He held them out; one was wrapped in bandages.

‘They are uninjured,’ he said, reassuringly; ‘a few blisters, that is all.’

‘But they might have been destroyed. Oh, Christian! if you knew—if you knew what I felt! Oh, if I could have died then! And yet I am glad to be alive, because there is something I must do. How long do they think I may live?’

‘My poor Annola, they say but a few hours.’

‘I must live longer than that,’ she cried, with something of her old energy. ‘I must live another day at least. Christian, you must do something for me.’

‘I will do anything in the world you ask,’ he said, bending over her tenderly.

Looking down on this poor wreck of womanhood, he forgot her wrongs towards him—forgot even the acute suffering she had brought upon one far dearer to him than himself—remembered only that she, his old comrade, the friend and protector of his childhood, was dying.

‘What can I do for you?’ he asked.

‘You must telegraph for Juliet at once. Ah! you must not refuse,’ as she saw him involuntarily draw back. ‘I must see her—I must speak to her before I die. Oh! why do you hesitate? Can you not trust me *now*?’

It seemed almost miraculous that anyone who had received such frightful injuries as Annola could manage to live even a few hours, yet by sheer strength of will she kept death at bay until Juliet stood by her bedside.

Juliet was pale and trembling; her whole form, indeed, shivered as her eyes met those of the dying woman.

‘You need not fear me now,’ said Annola, while those hollow eyes of hers lit up with a passing glow. ‘I—I have sent for you to atone.’

‘Oh, do not try to speak,’ cried Juliet, with tears starting to her eyes. ‘Oh, Annola! poor Annola! how dreadful to see you like this!’

‘I feel no pain,’ said Annola; ‘sensation is over for me. I had to live until you came. I want to give him to you myself. He is mine still. You shall take him only from me. Christian! are you here?’

‘I am here,’ said he, in an unsteady voice.

The ruling passion was indeed strong in death, and yet somehow this evidence of it filled him only with overwhelming compassion. Poor Annola! poor ardent, wayward woman! It was characteristic of her to cling thus desperately to him to the very last.

‘He is mine,’ she repeated feebly, ‘but he shall be yours now—yours because I give him to you. I give him to you of my own free will. I wish you to marry and be happy. I have never been happy. I snatched at everything that I wanted in life, and yet I hold nothing—nothing but emptiness and shadows; the reality always escaped me. But you—you——’ She broke off, looking from one to the other with eyes that were fast growing dim. ‘Clasp hands,’ she said.

EPILOGUE.



CHRISTIAN glanced up at the balcony of the Lennoxes' London house as he rang the bell; it was gay with flowers. Spring had come again—spring, full of brightness and promise.

The door opened immediately; he had been expected. Professor Lennox himself came out into the hall to greet him.

'She is waiting for you, my boy,' he said, as he grasped him by both hands. 'Go up to her—she is waiting.'

Christian bounded up the stairs with a step almost as buoyant as that which had characterised him in his boyish days.

The old man looked after him, smiled to himself, rubbed his hands, and disappeared into his study. There he immediately dropped into the nearest chair and wiped his eyes.

'My little girl!' he said. 'My little girl! After this long trial—sunshine at last. Well, I shall have to part with her, so there must be a few clouds somewhere. She has earned her happiness—yes, she has certainly earned her happiness—and he too. Any shortcomings in the past have been nobly atoned for—he has raised himself and is uplifting the world.'

He rose, and paced up and down the room a moment or two restlessly, and then went to the door, opening it softly and listening.

'I don't hear the piano to-day,' he said to himself. 'Well, well, together they will sing to the Lord a new song—new, and yet the same as in the beginning. The canticle of canticles, indeed. *I to my beloved, and my beloved to me!*'

THE END.

Canada in the Sixties.

II.

A JOURNEY TO THE RED RIVER.

I TOOK no other extensive ramble with my Redskin friends, but spent the remainder of the winter shooting and fishing in the neighbourhood of Wolf Pond, making a few excursions to Grand Lake and other points at no great distance from my hut, and doing the best I could to regain my usual health and strength. In this I was so far successful that I determined to make an unusually long journey during the approaching summer, for the purpose of seeing the land and enjoying the sport of shooting, of which I am passionately fond, though I am no wholesale slaughterer, holding that to be no sport which degenerates to animal murder. The tracking of a single deer, or bear, all day long is to me a delight of the highest degree, even if, after all, I fail to get the anticipated shot.

Most of the Indian men had returned to their families by the end of March, in anticipation of the break-up of the frost. While the frost lasts, the snow is as dry as sand. All loose particles that cling to your clothing are easily brushed or shaken off; but everybody knows how exceedingly penetrating is wet snow. The Indians do not mind it, nor do they ever seem to suffer much from rheumatism—certainly not to the extent of becoming cripples from it; but when the thaw has fairly set in, snow-shoes are no longer of use. It is impossible to drag through the wet and clogging mass with them, far less to drag a burden over it. So the last days of winter are employed by the Red Men in preparing for the journey to the Company's depot, to dispose of the pelts collected during the winter hunt.

All my friends were in good heart, the collection of pelts having been a good one, much above the usual average. But it is not to be supposed that all hunting ceases with the winter. On

the contrary, some of those animals which yield the most valuable furs hibernate, and, consequently, can only be captured in the spring and summer.

My friends were in the habit of taking their pelts to Moose Factory, on James Bay (an inlet of Hudson Bay), for the purpose of barter, that being the most easily reached, though not the nearest, of the Company's depots; but I, wishing to have Indians whom I knew and could rely on with me in my journey to Red River, offered to purchase all their furs. As I gave them double what the Company would, besides saving them a troublesome journey, they readily consented; and I packed in my hut all the pelts in my possession, to be disposed of on a more convenient occasion.

The Indians I selected to accompany me were Tom, Sam, Natanyan, and Otmasquilton; the two latter young men from the Cree hamlet, who were not yet married. I thus interfered with no family arrangements in selecting my companions; and the remuneration agreed on, consisting of powder, balls, and articles of particular use to Indians, was looked forward to by my younger men as a certain means of enabling them to settle in life on their return. I thus became the leader of my first exploring party, if I may be permitted to dignify it with such a term—a hearty and willing party, who had to sever no family ties to follow me.

The journey was to be by water, and therefore our preliminary task was to make a canoe suitable for such an expedition; that is, one large enough to contain five persons and several hundredweight of stores, and yet light enough to be portable overland on the shoulders of two men. The task of constructing such a canoe I left entirely in the hands of the four Indians who were to accompany me, and they completed the work in less than three days without exertion, using birch bark, sewn with sinew, and all seams paid with resin.

During the month of April there were several slight thaws, followed by sharp frosts, which made the surface of the snow in many places as smooth as glass. Perhaps from this cause, there seemed to be much suffering among the animal inhabitants of the district, many deer, principally cariboo, coming to the vicinity of the Indian lodges, followed by wolves and smaller beasts of prey. The wolves carried away one child, and severely bit a larger boy; and committed many minor depredations amongst the dogs and property of the Indians. Many wolves, foxes, gluttons, and small fur-bearing mammals were trapped or shot in this month.

Early in May the thaw became general, and the ice on the rivers and lakes broke up; and on the 13th we made a start by carrying the canoe and stores to the Ottawa River. This was a very easy stage, as there were scores of willing hands to help us. My hut, and the goods therein stored, I left in charge of Andrew Whitting and his wife and daughter.

The Ottawa was in a dangerous state, full of huge blocks of floating ice; but we were only on it a few hours. After descending the stream, which had a good current at this time, for about thirty miles, we landed and prepared to pass the night ashore; and a bitterly cold night it proved, with wind and rain, which continued throughout the following day. The whole of this day was taken up in making an eleven miles portage to a small stream which ran into Lake Nipissing, and thence to Lake Huron. The ice in Nipissing had been drifted to the north-westward by the wind, but the mouth of the river was blocked, and we were compelled to make a very troublesome portage to avoid it. However, once on the waters of the lake we found the centre clear of ice, and made a rapid passage, though not without danger on account of the strength of the wind. The river discharging the waters of Nipissing into Huron was comparatively free of ice, and there was but little in Huron itself. By the time we reached Huron the wind was blowing a hurricane, and we were compelled to lose nearly a week; for no canoe can live on the great lakes when a gale is blowing.

The time required to make a canoe voyage round the northern shores of Lake Huron is calculated to be not less than a week, and more often nine or ten days. The same calculation is made for Superior. But this is the actual time for paddling. If there is much wind, and the weather is bad, a week or a fortnight may be lost in waiting ashore, and occasionally double that time is wasted. Fifty miles a day is a fair rate of paddling for a large canoe; and this can be done day after day without over-exertion. One man, in a light hunting canoe, can maintain a much higher rate of speed in smooth water.

After three months' travel we arrived on August 13 at the Red River Settlement, which was, at this time, an extremely isolated colony. It is situated in the fork between the Red River and the river Assiniboine, and is on the verge of the immense prairies of Northern America. It was, even at this time, an exceedingly prosperous place, though scantily peopled, and is now the centre of the world's cornfields. It is now merged, I believe, in the

political division of Manitoba. In 1866 the population did not, according to such information as I could glean, exceed 13,000 or 14,000 souls; and of these the bulk were foreigners—Scandinavians, Germans, Russians, and Yankees—and half-breeds. The colony was founded by Lord Selkirk in 1811 or 1812, but there had been a fur-trading post here from time immemorial. This seems to have been a *free-trading* post; and it was here that the North-West Company, the rivals of the Hudson people, had their firmest footing. Just outside Fort Garry, the capital of the Settlement, the fight took place in which Governor Semple lost his life; and the subsequent troubles (in 1870) with the Canadian Government are remembered by most middle-aged people.

At the time of my visit these troubles were already brewing. It was known, or feared, that Canada would certainly purchase or otherwise become possessed of the territory before many years had passed; and I often heard the threat uttered that there would be armed resistance to any such acquirement. The foreign, and especially the half-breed, element, fomented by certain Yankee agitators, were particularly inveterate against 'English rule,' as they termed it. This expression was, I think, put into their mouths by Irish Fenians, who came here from the States for the express purpose of having 'a slap at the d——d Saxon,' as I heard one of them phrase it.

The entrance to the Red River from Lake Winnipeg is between very flat, marshy banks, which are covered with sedge and giant bulrushes, three or four times the size of those growing in England, but otherwise like them. The country in all directions that could be seen from the canoe was very flat, and Winnipeg so shallow that the rushes grew in the water at a greater distance than a mile from the actual shore. These rushes gave harbourage to swarms of ducks, geese, and other wild-fowl; and for the first time on our journey I had a day's good sport among the ducks. I was greatly disappointed, however, to find at supper that night that these wild ducks are very poor eating. There is nothing remarkable in the flavour of an English wild duck, but it is far better than the best of these. In fact, with the exception of the canvas-back of the States (which is more thought of than it deserves) and one or two others, all the North American ducks are of poor quality for the table.

I shot thirty-two ducks in the space of a couple of hours, and lest it should be thought that I indulged in a wanton slaughter, I may mention that they were all eaten before we reached Fort

Garry, two days later; any one of my Indian friends thinking nothing of consuming a brace of ducks at breakfast or supper, and Tom picked the bones of two brace at one meal. With the exception of two species (possibly young birds, for many young were flying, and the plumage varies much at different stages of growth), all these ducks greatly resembled those found in the fens of England. The first was the common pintail, *Dafila caud-acuta* of English ornithologists. This was tolerably abundant, and evidently bred in the marshes at the Winnipeg end of the Red River. I shot one gadwall, *Anas strepera* (miscalled a widgeon at Fort Garry), three dusky ducks, *Anas obscura*, and fourteen that were not distinguishable from the common wild duck, *Anas boscas*; but, as I have said, none of these ducks was equal in flavour to those of the same species found in England. In addition to the ducks, I shot five American widgeon, *Mareca americana*, and these were much superior to the ducks as food. The geese were so wild that, on this occasion, I could not get a shot at them.

As we proceeded up the river the country became less marshy, and before we reached Stone Fort there was forest on both sides of the river. I afterwards found that this forest formed a belt from one or two to five, and in a few places twelve, miles broad on the banks of the Red River, Assiniboine, and their tributaries. The country outside the forest belt was open prairie, the soil undoubtedly rich, and the climate at this season balmy and delightful, though hot during the middle of the day. Already the timber had been appreciably thinned in many places, and unless some by-law is made for its preservation there seems to be danger of its being speedily entirely destroyed. The inhabitants were using it recklessly as firewood, and in some instances burning it off the land to make clearings, a practice common all over the country at one time, and one which no language is too strong to condemn. Could I have my way, I would insist on so much of the timber being left intact; and I would punish with the most drastic penalties all wanton destruction of either trees or animals. I dare say that I am 'behind the times,' and a 'faddist,' but there are other people besides money-grubbers and merchants to be considered; and it is no great demand to ask that a portion of the world's beautiful surface should be left as God made it, for the pleasure of those who love Nature, and the good of those who are to come after us.

As we neared Fort Stone we seemed to be approaching

civilisation ; the unusual sight of a church spire first attracting attention. This was at the 'Indian settlement.' Where we find 'Indian settlements' in America, we may be sure that the march of civilisation has made rapid strides through the district, and that there is a religious and moral force at work which is performing great things—for good or evil, or that terrible mixture of both which, to my mind, is the source of all misery, and which is always found in great excess when men congregate in cities and populous colonies.

The settlers' houses seemed to be mostly, if not entirely, built on the banks of the river facing the water, and I was much surprised at the substantial manner in which many of them were built. Some might be truly called handsome mansions, and the grounds were laid out with a taste and care that could not be exceeded in any centre of an old civilisation. Stone was the material mostly in use, and Stone Fort was the first building of that description that I had seen in the country constructed of any class of masonry. It is a place of no great strength and could be easily taken by escalade ; but its walls were high and well built, and furnished with demi-bastions at the corners.

Corn-growing seemed to be then, as it certainly is now, the chief industry of the settlers ; but there was an abundance of all sorts of domestic animals and poultry. During our stay we lived on fresh mutton, and I bought a fine hog and salted it to be eaten when we resumed our journey. Flour, ground locally, was to be had for a song, so that I was enabled to replenish all our stores.

We arrived at Fort Garry, the chief post of the Settlement, on the 15th, and stayed a week, anxious as I was to resume our voyage. The colonists treated me with the greatest hospitality, and I almost made up my mind to return to Red River and become a farmer. Perhaps it would have been as well if I had done so.

Having borrowed a horse, I rode out some miles on the prairie to have a look at the country. It is a different sort of prairie from that of the Mississippi Valley, not being distinguished by that billowy, rolling appearance that is the prominent trait of the latter district. Occasionally there is some undulating ground ; but for the most part the country, outside the timber region, is almost flat. Wherever there is a brook or rivulet, there is a narrow belt of woodland on its banks. At other parts it is difficult to find so much as a bush, the ground being covered with a rich growth of

long grass, with flowers as abundant in summer as on the prairies of the south.

Here and there are shallow lakes and marshes, which, in many cases, are not permanent, but dry up in summer; but they attract enormous numbers of wild-fowl; and at evening time I sometimes saw flocks of ducks, &c., that must have numbered at least tens of thousands. It is only at certain times, however, that they thus congregate. Generally they fly in small parties, and the geese and swans, particularly, will be seen in wedge-shaped parties, or straight lines, of a dozen to fifty or sixty birds. In a ride of twenty miles across the prairie I saw no big game; but many small mammals and birds congregate in the woods. As none of them seemed to be peculiar to this region, I need not dwell on them here.

Having marked a small shallow lake, partly dry, which was much frequented by the wild-fowl, I had a day's shooting there, going alone. The birds were rather wilder than I should have expected to find them at a spot situated seven miles from the nearest habitation of man, and for a long time I despaired of obtaining a swan, which was the chief object of my wishes. At length, however, after creeping slowly and painfully for fully a mile under cover of the reeds, I arrived within fifty or sixty yards of nine birds which were feeding near the shore, and fired both barrels just as they arose from the surface of the water. Up they all went soaring round in a great circle, and in a wedge-shaped form, not one of them showing the least sign of being wounded, though my gun was charged with double B shot. I watched them, with no slight vexation, ascend to an enormous height till they looked scarcely bigger than starlings, when suddenly one dropped as straight as a plummet. The seemingly slow fall of that bird was really a beautiful sight, and filled my soul with joy. I saw it strike the ground, and rebound amid a cloud of loose feathers, a good half-mile away.

It proved to be a truly magnificent bird, sixty-five inches in length; and, I feel sure, was larger than any tame swan I have ever seen. It was an American trumpeter swan, *Cygnus buccinator*, and was not much disfigured by its tremendous fall, which could not have been much less than a mile. All my efforts on this and a subsequent day to obtain a second specimen were fruitless.

Nor did I have much better success with the geese. These cunning birds were as unapproachable as the swans; and it was not until I had recourse to the assistance of my Indian friends that I

succeeded in obtaining a shot at them. Lying hidden among the rushes, Tom so cleverly imitated the cry of these birds that a flock of about twenty was allured to within gunshot, and I gave them a right and a left. With the first barrel I killed my bird, but in the second case the goose was only wounded and led my Indian friend a fine chase over the prairie before it could be secured. It made repeated and most adroit efforts to get to the water, and it required all Tom's nimbleness to prevent it effecting its purpose. Once there it would no doubt have swum out to the reeds and effectually have hidden itself. This trick of imitating the cry is very common among Indian hunters; and some whites learn it sufficiently well to deceive the birds. Not only geese, but many other birds, and also mammals, are thus allured within easy shot; but on this occasion the birds could not be deceived again, and the brace I secured was all that I obtained at Red River. They were of the common Canadian kind, *Bernicla canadensis*, which is a large dark-coloured bird, blackish and dark brown being the prevailing tints of its colour, with white cheeks and throat and whitish belly.

The most important object of my visit to Fort Garry was accomplished by my succeeding in engaging Achil Guelle, a French-Canadian voyageur, to act as guide and assistant during the remainder of my purposed journey. He was a man of fifty years, well acquainted with Indian ways and notions, and highly recommended as a faithful fellow, who would be prepared to sustain my authority. Of course the real reason for engaging him was not revealed to my Indian friends, who would have been highly offended, and would have probably left me if they had suspected that I was in any way dissatisfied with them, or mistrusted their fidelity. I had so managed down to this point as to avoid all subject of dispute; but, as I have already hinted, it had become evident to me that these braves to a certain extent despised my youth and want of experience. This may seem strange to persons unacquainted with the nature and ways of Indians considering that I had been made a complimentary chief; but chiefs among the Crees have no great authority.

We left Fort Garry on August 23, and re-entered Lake Winnipeg the following day, again taking toll of the ducks and widgeon, of which Sam and I shot, between us, nearly fifty. The canoe was now so heavily laden that I began to fear that she was hardly safe; but the rapid consumption of provisions speedily remedied this.

We slept ashore, of course, every night, under the shelter of bushes and trees, and with a good fire at our feet. This was scarcely needed, as the heat was so great, even at night, that I could rarely endure the weight of a blanket over me, and lay with it folded under my head in place of a pillow; but a fire is always desirable at night. In the first place, it makes wolves and foxes chary of approaching the camp; and though men have nothing to fear from these animals, they will often make sudden grabs at provisions and leather articles, even boots and belts, the loss of which is a great inconvenience to travellers in uninhabited districts. Moreover the light of a fire may be of great use in the event of any unforeseen occurrence; and is in any case cheerful and comfort-inspiring. I should say that any temporary bivouac is styled 'a camp' in the American wilderness.

There is a marked difference in the appearance of Winnipeg and those lakes hitherto passed over and described. I had expected, though I admit from groundless preconceived notions, to find it the most picturesque of all the lakes; as a matter of fact, it is the least so of any of them. It is a prairie lake; that is, bare sloping banks run down to the water, and often form long stretching peninsulas in it. The ground is covered with green, bright-looking grass, and in the proper season there is an abundance of wild flowers; but it is only at places that there are woods near the water. The water is very shallow, showing that it is an extensive hollow of the prairie which is permanently flooded. There are many islands of small size, some of which are occasionally covered with the rising water, and on a few of them there are bushes and a tree or two. Near the shore there is a dense growth of reeds which harbour enormous numbers of waterfowl of all kinds—swans, geese, ducks, widgeon and others. The length of this great lake must be nearly, or perhaps quite, three hundred miles, and it is generally from forty to fifty broad; so, like the other great lakes, it has the appearance of an inland sea. There are plenty of fish in its waters, of the same kind as those in the other lakes; and at some spots near the shore the mud was black with myriads of fry on which the gulls and ducks were feasting greedily.

There were myriads of mosquitoes also, and of small green flies which bit cruelly; also dragon-flies, and other flying insects which seemed to be attractive to a number of small birds, amongst which I thought I recognised the common swamp-sparrow, *Melospiza georgiana*; but I can say nothing certain of these small birds, as

specimens could not be obtained, those shot falling amongst the thicket of reeds, where they could not be found.

At certain spots close inshore I almost daily saw snipe in small parties of three to a dozen. They were very wild, rising as soon as the canoe got within a hundred and fifty yards of them; but I succeeded in securing three, several others being lost owing to the nature of the ground where they were shot. These birds are called by American ornithologists the common English snipe, *Gallinago delicata*. They are the 'Wilson's snipe' of English naturalists, and certainly differ from the 'common' snipe. Their breeding-grounds are undoubtedly on the shores of this lake as I am certain that some of them were young; but, of course, all birds have finished their nesting in this region before the end of August.

We kept along the eastern shore, generally two or three miles from land, making some forty or fifty miles a day with the aid of paddles alone. For though sails are sometimes used in canoes, they are never safe, and we had none. We slept ashore, as a matter of course, throughout the journey, generally on the ground, but, where procurable, on a bed of spruce branches. If a settler's hut lay in our way we were sure of a friendly reception, and the same may be said of the Indian huts; but we usually eschewed these latter on account of the filth that always made them an abomination inside and out; for an Indian has not even an elementary notion of cleanliness. So I need hardly mention that I was always chary of accepting Indian hospitality, though it is but just to say that the poor people of this region were always not only willing, but anxious, to show kindness.

Neither settlers nor Indians, however, were often met with in the wilderness. The latter seem never to have been very numerous in this northern district; and yearly they display a greater tendency to congregate near the townships and settlements, where they sometimes follow similar small trades and professions to those of the gipsy vagabonds of Europe. The squaws, or women, particularly, hawk trifling articles about the settlements; and there is, or used to be, always a party of them at Niagara, selling moccasins and beadwork, and not unfrequently winning the hearts of susceptible trappers and backwoodsmen, who often take Indian wives.

On August 28, we passed a deserted post of the Hudson Company, situated at the bottom of a creek. The place was in ruins, and the stone-built chimney standing alone had a

weird and saddening effect on the spirits. We passed the night at this spot, as it furnished us with a convenient cooking-place; and just after dusk I killed a musquash on the bank of the creek. This was the first of these animals which we had seen since commencing our journey on the lakes. Many of the small mammals are nocturnal in their habits, which no doubt accounts for their being but seldom seen. The best way of testing their presence and number in a district is to set traps overnight, when, if they are numerous, some are sure to be caught. Thus the accidental killing of this musquash set the Indians to making springs and placing them before every likely looking rat-hole along the banks, with the result that five more musquash were found captured in the morning. These springs are made with wire, which we had with us for this purpose. Many small mammals and birds were afterwards caught in them, and as these are usually entangled by the neck, they are almost always dead when found in the morning. Birds can be caught with springs made of bents, &c., but rodents, like the musquash, will bite through these and escape. It is astonishing what a lot of small pelts will be collected by a skilful trapper or Indian without expending a single charge of powder. I have known some of these men have nearly two hundred traps, of various sorts, set about a district a few miles square—as many, in fact, as he could possibly attend to.

Near the northern end of Winnipeg we entered a small stream known as the Jack River, though I could not find it entered on my map by that or any other name. It is a stream which connects several small lakes together, and though it was practically currentless, empties, I suppose, the waters of Winnipeg and these small lakes into the Nelson River, which carries them into Hudson Bay.

The same night we arrived at another of the Company's depots or stations—Norway House, which is situated at the embouchure of the Jack River. The first notice we had of the approach to this house was a flagstaff fixed on a high rock with the Union Jack floating from it, the house itself being hidden in a snug ravine. There was quite a little village here of one-storey huts ranged in a square, the fort being of the usual gimcrack construction. Whether any of these depots were ever seriously attacked by the Indians I do not know, but if so, it is wonderful that they were not destroyed; for all those that I saw, with the exception of Stone Fort and one or two others, were built of timber, and that

in anything but a formidable style of construction. A block-house, skilfully made, is capable of offering a stout resistance—of enduring a prolonged siege—unless heavy guns are brought against it; but these forts of the Company are without ditches, or proper outward casing of earth, and their contour and elevation are not of the best; nor are any obstructions placed at weak points; and trees and other shelter for an enemy are permitted to remain standing close to their walls. I doubt strongly if they could hold out twenty-four hours against the attack of a party of riflemen.

The interior of these forts, or depots, is on a par with the exterior. The agent, or factor, in charge of one of these stations has, of course, his private apartments, which, I presume, he furnishes according to his own taste, and at his own expense; but the junior clerks are allotted a common room in which the only furniture I have ever seen is a few rough plank tables, three-legged stools, a stove, and similar articles. There is no pretence at comfort. The young men have usually a gun or two, and fishing-rods, hung about the walls; and perhaps the implements of a few games, such as cricket, croquet, &c. There is a 'labourer' to attend them, if it is a permanent station; but when travelling they have to do for themselves the best that they can. The general discomfort of the place is increased, in my opinion, by the custom of whitewashing the rooms inside and out. Even in summer I consider whitewash an eyesore: in winter it is simply an abomination. Clean and wholesome! No doubt. And carpets on the floor are apt to breed disease! Indeed. But I am too old a bird to swallow all the medical profession say; and, moreover, the fleshly lusts have got such a hold on me that I go in for comfort even if there is 'death in the pot.' I have found this rule of life agree remarkably well with me so far; and it is to be noted that a scarecrow often keeps the bird from a good feed.

I am a born Bohemian, and the wildernesses of this splendid continent harbour a siren whose enchantments I never could resist. Where many men have grumbled at their hardships, and some talked of perishing, I have been in paradise. Although to some extent a cripple (though not seriously lame at this time), I have been all through life a man of Herculean powers of endurance; and the solitude of the wilderness has for me the same allurements that the sea is said to have for many nations. Not but that I love the sea also—what Englishman does not? On this my first extensive journey in the New World, I was in such a state of delighted excitement that no fear, no force, could have induced

me to abandon it. Somehow, by some means, I would have fulfilled my will.

Although Norway House lies in a ravine, or hollow, its foundations are placed on rock, and the whole district is rocky. The gardens, which are well kept, and surround the stockades of the fort, as well as the huts, seem to have been made, with great labour, of the sandy mud of the river. It is impossible to see the fort until you are just on it, and it is commanded by a huge rock close to the stockades, so that the place is not tenable from a military point of view. The river swells into a lake here, which, although small for this part of the world, is in reality so extensive that the eye cannot reach the opposite shore by a very long way. It is called Play-green Lake, and the scenery about it begins again to become very picturesque.

At the time of our visit there was much bustle at Norway House, for in addition to many Indians who had arrived with their bundles of pelts, there was a 'brigade' of canoes temporarily halting, and waiting to be joined by others. Many of the voyageurs were well known to Achil, and for a day or two we had a very merry party.

The Canadian voyageur is a good chum, as a rule, and would be a downright fine fellow if it were not for his confounded political opinions. Whoever imagines that the majority of the French Canadians are loyal to the British makes a woeful mistake. Eighty per cent. of them at least have made up their minds that the Britisher must go, and they will never lose an opportunity to be a thorn in our sides, especially should we have a war with France.

But, this feeling apart, the voyageur is, as I say, a very good fellow—a desperately hard worker, patient, and faithful to his employer. He has usually an exceedingly pleasant face, is polite, like his French ancestors, and, though inclined to be penurious, is not so selfish as Monsieur Crapaud himself. He is willing to live as hard as he works, and in all canoe management and wood-craftsmanship is almost as skilful as an Indian.

I made my stay at Norway House as brief as possible, and, after passing across Play-green Lake and ascending the stream for about forty miles, we branched off to the right into a creek, or brook, which led us another twenty miles into the wilderness. The banks of this and all other streams in the neighbourhood were high, often precipitous, so that we could not see the country we were passing through without climbing up them, a height of forty

or fifty feet, and sometimes double that. The country was flat, covered with bushes in some places and forest in others, and occasionally open and park-like. It was everywhere well watered with streams and small lakes. That part which I had selected for our camp was covered with forest, with open intervals here and there at distances of a few miles apart. A beautifully clear brook flowed close to the spot we occupied, and furnished us with the necessary water. As there was only a foot or two of water in it, it could be stepped across with ease.

Here I intended to stay a month. The canoe was carried up to a place of safety and lodged between the forks of two small trees, and several temporary huts were made of branches, thatched with twigs and grass, for sleeping-places and the protection of our stores. In fact, in a couple of days' time we had made ourselves quite comfortable, and I was happy, as I believed that there were no other inhabitants, except a few wandering Indians, within a hundred miles of us. Norway House, distant some seventy or eighty miles, was probably the nearest post of whites.

PAUL FOUNTAIN.

Why Old Jackalse Danced the War-dance.

A SOLID burst of rain; the hissing, thrashing deluge of the high veldt, had driven the hoe-wielders from the tobacco 'lands,' and the old Hottentot had retired thankfully to the barn to work on a lambskin kaross he was making for the mistress. There the children found him, though for the moment they were quiet as their father stepped in to ask old Hendrik, in his strong American accent, if this rain was likely to flush the Vaal too deep for crossing at the drift below.

'Well, baas,' answered he, 'dis hyere rain won't do it, p'raps, but I seen it pretty black up de river all dis mawnin', an' I reckon de drift a-gun' to be too strong fo' gun a-visitin'.'

'Then I guess I ain't a-tryin' it,' decided the baas, withdrawing to the house.

The children took up the subject. 'Is it goin' to be just so big wide, Ou' Ta'?' asked little Annie.

'Well, Ainkye,' answered old Hendrik; 'p'raps it ain't a-goin' to be yus' so wide's it was when Ou' Jackalse dance a war-dance, and Ou' Mensefreiter hit hisse'f on a rock into no bigger'n a water-millon; but it's a-goin' to be too full fo' your daddy to go yus' sa'nterin' troo it.'

'Oh, Ou' Ta', you never told us about that Mensefreiter at all,' cried the little girl reproachfully.

'Didn't I now?' cried old Hendrik. 'Well, I'd ought to anyhow, 'cause it was mighty tough times fo' Ou' Jackalse an' Ou' Wolf dem days. Besides, dis is de same drift right hyere below.'

'You see,' he went on, squaring himself on the sack of mealies which served him for a seat, 'times was hard wid all sorts of folk dat year. De rin'erpes' (*rinderpest*) come along, an' it just clean out all de game an' de buck, till Ou' Jackalse an' Ou' Wolf dey

may hunt all day an' dey may hunt all week an' Sunday, an' den dey won't get de shadda of a buck. Dey ha' to keep on a-drinkin' water to keep dere tummies from growin' front an' back togeder.'

'An' what did Missis Jackalse an' little Ainky Jackalse do for somethin' to eat, then?' asked Annie anxiously.

'Oh, dere was no Missis Jackalse den,' answered the old Hottentot cheerily. 'Dis was long 'fore dat. Dis was when Ou' Jackalse an' Ou' Wolf was young fellas, an' don't only go roun' upsittin' wid de nices' young meises (*misses*) dey can hear of. An' it stan' 'em in han' to be young fellas an' to had no fam'lies; 'cause de young fellas can scratch all day if dey like an' den dere ain't nawtin' to eat.

'Well, you knows Ou' Jackalse is mighty slim a-gettin' scoff if dere's anybody else has some, but it wahn't no use waitin' to steal what other folk ain't polished off, 'cause dere ain't nawtin' fo' dem to begin on, let alone to leave fo' him to sneak it. He yus' ha' to hump hissef an' rustle roun' if he's a-gun' to get anytin'. An' dis is where Ou' Jackalse, bein' so smart, come in handy. Ou' Wolf he keeps a-gauntin' an' a-wobblin' on ahter de buck he think he *might* see over de nex' rise, but Ou' Jackalse he yus' keep hees eye skinned to size up *what's* on de yonder side de ridge.

'Well, by-n-by he sees a farm where dere's a patch o' to'acco wanted 'tendin' to mighty bad, an' de farmer he's a-leanin' on de gate an' firs' a-lookin' at de row an' den a-lookin' at de hoe, as if fo' one ting he can't yus' make up his mind where he's a-gun' to begin, an' as if for anoder t'ing he can't yus' settle if he's goin' to start at all dis mawnin' nohow.

'Ou' Jackalse he look an' he sit down, an' he 'gun' to brush de grass behin' him wid his tail, sort o' slow an' like he's t'inkin' pretty deep. He can't *eat* to'acco; he know dat, but de man what work in de to'acco he can eat sometin', an' sometin' a long shot better'n to'acco—he eat scoff. So Ou' Jackalse he make up his mind an' down he go to de farmer.

'“Mawnin', baas!” ses he. “Darie (*that there*) to'acco 'gin to look as if some of it gun' to run wild an' some of it gun' to choke 'fore long,” ses he.

'“Oh! 'taint nawtin' to shout about yet,” ses de farmer. “A good man an' a good hoe soon set dat a'right agen.”

'“Well, what you reckon you gun' to give de good man fo' usin' de good hoe an' doin' it?” ses Ou' Jackalse straight out.

'“Oh, I give him his scoff, an' a twist o' to'acco,” ses de farmer, lazy like.

"Hu!" ses Ou' Jackalse. "Ain't you 'feared you'll send him to drink an' to end up in de tronk wid all de money he'll have fo' spendin'?" Ou' Jackalse he fair sniff a bit.

'De man turn roun'. "You please yoursef," ses he. "I tink scoff's a lot in dese times, when de rin'erpes' is kill off not on'y all de meat but all de oxen too, so we cahn' fetch nawtin' from nowhere."

"Well, good scoff?" axes Ou' Jackalse, like he want to make de bes' of it.

"Dere ain't on'y one sort o' scoff at my place," ses de man. "Same sort o' scoff I get mysef."

"Well, you leave de hoe here an' I see about it," ses Ou' Jackalse, an' de man he yus' drop de hoe like it was hot an' offs home to sit in de cool an' drink coffee.

'So Ou' Jackalse he'd made a start anyhow: he'd got a yob at least. But if you t'ink he goin' to balance hissef on de end o' dat hoe, well, you's got hold o' de wrong ox dis time. He yust come along to Ou' Wolf. "At las'," ses he. "At las' Is'e got a sight to get some scoff anyhow," an' he fetch just such a big breat' like as if a sack o' Kaffir corn flop off hees back.

"How's dat?" ses Ou' Wolf, a-sittin' down an' proppin' hissef up wid his front foots, an' his tongue hangin' out like a sheep-skin.

"Dere's a farmer de yonder side de ridge, an' he want some 'un to do a bit in his to'acco; an' he give us a share of his scoff same as hissef," ses Ou' Jackalse; an' he look at Ou' Wolf as if he yus' ought to send de predicant (*clergyman*) a cart full o' good t'ings f'm de pantry to show hees t'anks, like a farmer when de rain save de crop or de wet look like ruinin' it.

'But Ou' Wolf he look at Ou' Jackalse sort o' s'picious. "Do a bit in de to'acco," ses he. "Dat's work, ain't it?" ses he.

"An' mighty glad to get it," ses Ou' Jackalse, out big an' loud, makin' as if he was just wishin' dere was a hoe dere dis minute, so he could lick right in.

"But—work," ses Ou' Wolf, an' he droop hees head an' he shake it slow an' swingin'.

"Well," ses Ou' Jackalse, sort o' like he ponderin' it. "Darie baas he reckon de man on de hoe is a-gun' to be workin', but de man on de hoe he might reckon he don' know so much about dat. He might reckon he knock it off in hees own time. He might s'pose it's him ha' to do it; an' he might 'emember dat de longer dat job las' de longer hees scoff las'. See? fathead!" ses he.

“Well, I wants de scoff,” ses Ou’ Wolf, “dere ain’t no shadda ’bout dat. But, de work; I don’ know,” ses he.

“Now you look-a-me,” ses Ou’ Jackalse, ’s if he was fair tired o’ fool argyin’. “You knows me. Is I likely to make de grass fly much a-workin’? or is I de sort o’ one to work at all if dere was any oder snift of a chance o’ scoff?” ses he.

“Ou’ Wolf, he tink he know Ou’ Jackalse pretty well by dis time. “No,” ses he, kind o’ considerin’. “I don’t t’ink you’d work if dere was any oder chance,” ses he.

“Come along o’ me, den,” ses Ou’ Jackalse, an’ away dey pops.

“Ou’ Jackalse he bring Ou’ Wolf along to de gate an’ he give him darie hoe. “Dis is you’ patch,” ses he, “mine’s furdur along on de yonder side de house. I’ll bring de scoff at dinner time, an’ in de meantime you yus’ get a sort o’ wiggle on you, like’s if you could work if you had to,” ses he, an’ off he stalk till he get out o’ sight. Den he yus’ flop down an’ bake hisse’f in ’e sun.

“Well, Ou’ Wolf he gets a sort o’ stroke on him like a bywoner dat tinks it’s a-pretty near time he shif’ to some farm where dey don’t raise no crops nohow, and den about an hour to noon along comes Ou’ Jackalse agen, an’ he looks at what Ou’ Wolf’s done, an’ he cocks his eye at what he ain’t done, an’ he tinks dere’s a fair ole little lot o’ dat yet.

“Look-a-me, Ou’ Wolf,” ses he. “It’s a-comin’ along to dinner time soon, but *you*; you yus’ about ain’t if dat’s all you done yet. De baas he’ll tink what I done, an’ he’ll see what you ain’t done, an’ den, why, dere you is! You ought to be sorry fo’ you’s’e’f, when you looks at what you done.”

“I yus’ is,” ses Ou’ Wolf, an’ he ain’t a-considerin’ fore he ses it needer. “I yus’ is,” an’ he sort o’ squint up at de sun to see how soon it a-gun’ to be noon, an’ he sort o’ guess at de row to see how soon it ain’t likely to be done.

“Well, it ain’t my look-out if de baas don’t gi’e you no scoff fo’ dat bit,” ses Ou’ Jackalse. “I got you de work, but you cahnt look fo’ me to do it fo’ you too, as well’s my own. I cahnt only ’pologise fo’ you. You better get a bit wigglier wiggle on you if wants some dinner, anyhow,” ses he, an’ off he pops.

“Well, Ou’ Wolf he tinks p’raps he had better hump hisse’f along a bit an’ make a kind of a shine. “I ain’ a-gun’ to let no sich a skellum ha’ to ’pologise fo’ me,” ses he, an’ he yus’ lit into dat row like he wants to get de baas to let him opset wid his daughter.

“Come along to noon, an’ de farmer he come out to see what

about de hoein'. Ou' Jackalse he pop up out o' de long grass an' meet him. "I was yus' a-comin' fo' de scoff," ses he.

"Scoff fo' dat much?" ses the farmer; "an' two o' you too!" ses he.

"Well," ses Ou' Jackalse, "we's a bit gone in fo' want o' scoff dese las' days since de rin'erpes', so p'raps we ain't a-quite got into de stroke yet. But if we has a good dinner to-day, why den to-morro'—well, to-morro'"—ses he, an' he t'row out hees han's like to-morro' dey yus' scoff darie hoein'!

"Well, we'll see," ses de farmer. "You can come along now an' get de scoff," an' so dey goes.

'Well, dis yere scoff turn out to be all biscèyt, Boer biscèyt, an' de baas he give Ou' Jackalse enough fo' bote o' dem, an' Ou' Jackalse he start back.

'Now on de way he see a bushy little bush an' he trow one biscèyt in dere to hide it. An' on de way he seen anoder little bush an' he trow anoder biscèyt into dat bush too, an' he do like a-dat till he ha'nt on'y one biscèyt left. An' den he up an' show Ou' Wolf dat *leetle* one biscèyt "Dat's all de man had," ses he. "One f'r hisse'f, one f'r his wife an' childer, an' one f'r us. But he's a-gun' to have mo' to-morrow, he ses."

"He yust is," ses Ou' Wolf, letting de hoe drop like he never had hold of it yet. "If he's a-gun' to get any more o' dis yere lan's hoed den he yust is. How's I a-gun' to hoe to'acco on half a biscèyt?" ses he. "Dis de sort o' yob you was so sa'cy dat you'd got it to keep us f'm starvin', is it?" ses he. "A whole one half o' one biscèyt!" snorts he, 's if he wants see somebody yus' step on his shadda an' dat's all.

"Well, half o' one biscèyt—dat's a deal better'n de whole o' one day widout no scoff at all," sniffs Ou' Jackalse, mighty insulted. "But den, never mind. I is a bit stronger'n you, anyhow; so you yust eat my half o' dat biscèyt as well's your own, an' I'll slip back an' eat some o' de corn I seen dropped by de barn. Dere's two-tree grains dere yet if de birds ain't pick 'em up 'fore dis," an' off he flops, lookin' yus' as full o' pious as a location predicant when he's got a good collection on a Sunday.

'Ou' Wolf he feel a mighty sneak to let Ou' Jackalse lose hees half de biscèyt like dat, but he don' can he'p it nohow, an' he yus' so 'ongry dat while he bite off hees own half o' de biscèyt he mess de yonder half de same time, an' den he might yus' as well eat dat half too, 'cause he cahnt offer it to Ou' Jackalse now when it's all mussed. An'—well; de fus' t'ing Ou' Wolf know,

gop! he scoff dat half too. But he feel dat mean dat he work dat hoe like steam to easy his mind a bit.

'All dis time Ou' Jackalse he's pickin' up dem biscèyt he hid in de bushes an yus' a-blowin' hisse'f out, till he cahnt on'y wink an' har'ly stir his tail, where he lie an' bake alongside a stone.

'Well, it go on like dis for one day after anoder, till one day along comes Ou' Mensefreiter an' he see Ou' Wolf a-hoein' in de to'acco, an' he see Ou' Jackalse a-snuggin' an' a-bakin' atween a bush an' a stone. "Wotto!" ses Ou' Mensefreiter. "Here's two," ses he; an' he fair seizes 'em, an' he offs.'

'But Ou' Ta,' interjected the little girl. 'What was that Mensefreiter like?'

'Oh, he was one o' dese yere bo'-constructors yo' daddy tell you about. An' yet he don't was yust a constructor needer. He was one o' dese puff adders what spring t'ree yards high an' t'ree yards far at you quicker'n you' eye can flash to watch 'em; only he was de grandaddy of 'em all, an' so he was bigger'n a bo'-constructor, an' de same way he could strike forty yard high an' forty yard far an' forty times quicker'n de biggest puff-adder dat ever make you yump an' run in de veldt. An' he yus' grab dese two and offs wid 'em to where he live—an' dat's de yonder side de drift down here.

'Well, de Mensefreiter he took de two out an' look 'em up an' down, top an' bottom, when he gets to his kraal. He feel Ou' Wolf's bones an' he shake his head. "You is pretty fine drawn," ses he. "It take two o' you to make a shadda. You'll want some fattin' 'fore you's good enough for a bile, let alone roast."

'Den he feel Ou' Jackalse, an' he sort o' smile all de way down hees back. "Well, you bin have a high ole time, ain't you, wid all dat fat on you? A week's feedin' on de berries here'll give you yus' a nice flavour," ses he.

'So nex' day he gi'en 'em baskets; a sort o' baskets like a bottle, so's you cahnt open it, an' so's you cahnt get your han' in. You yus' drops de berries in, an' den Ou' Mensefreiter he unlock de lid an' see how much you fetch home. An' off dese two flops to pick berries.

"Now look-a-me," ses Ou' Wolf to Ou' Jackalse. "You better to don't eat too much now, else you get scoffed 'fore you know it. You better to get t'in like me an' den you live longer. I'se yust a-gun' to pick berries till de sweat run, den Ou' Mensefreiter ain't a-gun' to was'e time eatin' me, I keep dat t'in."

"A'right. I'll t'ink on," ses Ou' Jackalse, but he ain't no

more'n see de berries in de sun dan he wink to hees nose end. "Ise fat," ses he to hisse'f. "Ise fat, an' Ise a-goin' to keep fat. Ou' Mensefreiter ain't a-eat me yet, and he ha'n't better hold hees breat' till he does, needer, else he's likely to get black in de face 'fore he finis'."

'Next he tas'e one berry, an' after dat he yust about put one berry in hees basket and forty-one in hees mout', till the yuice run all down hees chest, an' he feel dat good he yus' cahn' he'p it but he fair stan' on his head wid fun like a wildebeeste.

'Well, it come along to time to get back to de kraal, an' yus' when Ou' Wolf was fair a-workin' an' a-s snatchin' at de berries to fill hees basket, Ou' Jackalse he sort o' sa'nter pas' de basket behind him an' swop hees own for it, yus' so slim an' so quick dat Ou' Wolf never dream on it. On'y when dey start fo' de kraal he say, "Dese yere berries mighty light, considerin' what a lot I pick an' all," an' he mop hees fore'ead as if he's glad dat yob done.

'Dis went on de same every day; Ou' Wolf bringin' yust a han'ful home, an' Ou' Jackalse a fat basket, till one day Ou' Mensefreiter he wink at Ou' Jackalse. "You is a bit slim, ain't you, bringin' all your berries home an' eatin' none, so's you won't get no fatter, huh? But dis is where *I* comes in. I yus' drops you inside dis hock," ses he, droppin' him in a empty place like a pigsty, "an' I fat you up wid seven days' feed o' pun'kin like a little pig. Den we see if you don't make de finest kind o' dinner," ses he. "An' you, Ou' Wolf," ses he, "you de all right sort now. Yus' you keep on in de berries, eatin' plenty like you bin a doin', an' den one o' dese days you be nice an' fat too."

'Ou' Wolf he take hees basket at dat an' off out to de bessy berries agen an' he won'er a bit; an' Ou' Jackalse he stop in de hock an' he kind o' begin to won'er too. Dere's two tree pun'kins, de finest kind o' pampoene, in de hock wid him—dat's hees scoff fo' de day, an' if he don't eat 'em all up 'fore night den he's yus' agun' to ketch it.

'Well, Ou' Jackalse he look at dem pampoene an' he kind o' feel he ain't yus' a-yearnin' fo' dinner nohow. He look over top de wall o' de hock but he know it ain't no manner o' use to try an' run for it, 'cause Ou' Mensefreiter snap him back 'fore he get hees stride har'ly. It ain't yus' sich a fat time bein' fat, ahter all, t'inks he, an' he sort o' wish he had Ou' Wolf dere wid him, somehow. He look dis way an' he look dat way, but dere ain't nawt'in' on'y de little pat' a-running down to de drift, and de drift

a-risin' an' a-risin' wid it keep on a-rainin' an' a-rainin' up de river. It look mighty like Ou' Jackalse name goin' to be "Mud" dis time, an' hees tail yust drop flop.

'Den he feel a sort o' quiet little twitch at hees tail. He look roun' sharp an' dere he see little Kleinkie Mousie. "What you bite me fo'?" ses Ou' Jackalse, kind o' big, 'cause it kind o' give him a start wid makin' him t'ink it was Ou' Mensefreiter had him.

"You's got all dese pampoene, ain't you? An' I want to talk to you about de seeds for my dinner," ses Kleinkie, his eyes yus' a-shinin' black an' his paws yus' ready to off 'fore you can swip you' tail.

'Ou' Jackalse he know he can't eat de seeds hisse'f, an' besides he ain't yus' dead gone on dem pun'kins nohow. He think he might's well be a fine fella an' get his name up wid Kleinkie. "A'right," ses he, "if you want a dinner, why, dere you is," ses he, an' he sweep his hand up like di'monds is dust an' he's yus' scatterin' dust down de wind. Den he lean up agen de corner o' de hock an' watch Kleinkie fair gnawin' dem seeds, like it quite do him good to watch it.

'Well, dis went on till de sevent' day, an' to-morro' mawnin' Ou' Jackalse he gun' to be shove in de pot an' roas'. He 'gin to look down hees nose some, 'specially when he look at de pun'kin Ou' Mensefreiter drop in fr him to eat dis day. It was yus' one pun'kin, only one; but it was de biggest old pun'kin you ever did see. "If I did get myse'f wrop round de outside o' dat pampoene I'd be sort o' fat-lookin' anyhow," ses he, an' he smile kind o' mournful.

'Den up pops little Kleinkie. "What's de matter?" ses he. "You looks like a location Kaffir when he bin had a night on Kaffir beer an' den ha' to work next mawnin'," ses he.

"Well," ses Ou' Jackalse. "I never did work yet 'cept to get 'out o' work. But if I don't find some way o' gettin' out o' dis 'fore night, widout Ou' Mensefreiter seein' me, den it mighty likely I'd be glad to ha' de chance to go to work to-morro' mawnin'."

"A bit rough, dat," ses Kleinkie. "If dere was any way I could he'p now?"

'Dat set Ou' Jackalse to studyin', an' it ain't a minute or two 'fore de twinkle 'gin to shine in hees eye, and hees tail begin to rise itse'f. "Look-a-me now, Kleinkie," ses he; "dere is one way, if you an' de rest o' yo' people like to he'p a bit."

"How's dat?" axes Kleinkie.

"Dis way," ses Ou' Jackalse. "I cuts a hole in darie pampoene an' den you an' de res' turn to an' gnaw an' scrape out de inside till dere ain't only yus' de shell left."

"An' den?" axes Kleinkie.

"Oh, den you'll see," ses Ou' Jackalse. "You yus' get darie pampoene scrape out first," ses he.

"Well," ses Kleinkie. "You gin us dem seeds a'right, you did, so now we see what about dis yob"; an' off he pop an' fetch all de rest o' de mouses, an' it ain't har'ly no time 'fore dey has dat pun'kin scrape as clean inside as de mealie pap pot in a bywoner's fam'ly.

"See me now," ses Ou' Jackalse, an' straight he lift darie pun'kin an' he drop it *qui-i-etly* over de wall onto de groun' outside, on dat side away from where Ou' Mensefreiter's lyin' sunnin' hisse'f. "See de drift down dere?" ses he; "an' see how high it is wid de flood? Well, once I get to de yonder side dat drift den Ou' Mensefreiter cahnt follo' me. Floods is dat much good anyhow. Now watch," ses he.

'Wid dat he wriggle hisse'f out ahter de pun'kin, yust as flat as a new skun sheepskin, an' 'fore you could look twice he wiggle hisse'f right into de inside o' dat pun'kin, till you couldn't see hide nor hair of him.

'Den Kleinkie hear him begin to sing, ve-ery soft an' low:

"Pampoenekie; Pampoenekie,
Roll down de pat'ickie;
Pampoenekie pat'ickie,
Pampoene roll!"

'An' darie pun'kin began an' ro-o-oll.

'Den Kleinkie keep on a-watchin', an' darie pun'kin he find de pat' dat run down to de drift. Kleinkie watch yet, an darie pun'kin keep on a-rollin' an' a swiftin' till, bounce! it splosh an' hit de water in de drift. Kleinkie watch, an' darie pun'kin went so fast it yus' swish right across to de yonder side de drift, an' Ou' Jackalse he step right out an' snatch up a willow stick in one hand, an' a big leaf in de oder, like a assegai an' a shield, an swip! he begin to do a war-dance, yust a-leapin' high an' a-chantin'.

'Ou' Mensefreiter he lift hees head when de pun'kin 'gun to roll. Ou' Mensefreiter he kink hees back when de pun'kin hit de drift. But Ou' Mensefreiter when he see Ou' Jackalse doin' darie

war-dance—swip! he whip hisse'f through de air, an' de first place he light was down by de edge o' de drift.

'Dat drift it mighty wider'n he ever tried it afore, but he see Ou' Jackalse a-springin' an' a-clinkin' hees heels togeder on de yonder side, an' Ou' Mensefreiter he hump hisse'f agen, an' swip! he strike for it to get dat Jackalse anyhow.

'Forty yards was hees every day jump, an sixty yards at Nachtmaal. But dis day he bested dat mor'n double, an' yet he don't do enough. Dere was a big rock a-stickin' out de water, a long way short o' bein' across, an' Ou Mensefreiter come into it wid hees nose whack! smack! sich a bash an' a biff dat it yust drove hees tail right on up into de inside of hees head, an' dere he was, all in a ball no bigger'n a water-millon, an' he roll off into de water an' down he go wid de stream; a rubble an' a-bubble, an' a-over an' a-pover, till he drowned. Dat's what happen to darie Mensefreiter,' finished old Hendrik.

'An, what did Ou' Wolf do?' demanded the little girl.

'Oh, Ou' Jackalse he shout for Ou' Wolf to come along. But Ou' Wolf he look at de drift an' he look at Ou' Jackalse. "Ain't you a-comin'?" shouts Ou Jackalse.

"What I want to come for?" ses Ou' Wolf. "All de berries I pick now I'll get a chance to eat 'em myse'f. An' what do I want to come for? Eatin' berries is better'n hoein' to'acco for half a biscèyt a day. You go an' hoe; I keep here wid de bessie berries. Besides—dere's pun'kin."

'And what did Old Jackalse have to do?' demanded the youngest boy.

'Well, I wouldn' yus' like to say what Ou' Jackalse ha' to do,' answered old Hendrik. 'But you can bet on what he didn' do—he didn' hoe.'

O. R.

The Stricken Field of Newbury.

A RANGE of vast and solemn downs stretches across the north-west corner of Hampshire, beginning near Basingstoke and running into Berkshire and Wiltshire by the remote villages of Ham and Shalbourne. It is twenty miles of wild scenery. The hills at some points wear a sombre look even when flushed in summer with the rose of the sainfoin, and when whole acres show yellow-gold dabbled with blood-red, where bird's-foot trefoil grows, blossom and the bud respectively dyed by these colours. This is, on the whole, an inhospitable piece of England, not to be explored conveniently on horseback; only one pony I ever knew, sturdy Welsh, would, with his rider, descend the steeper of the roadless downs about here. It is also uninviting to the cyclist, who must confine himself to the main roads, and is unable to roam among the hill-tops, from which views of rare extent and beauty are to be enjoyed. Several of these summits are scarred by the remains of ancient earthworks and dotted by barrows or burying-places, which show that thousands of years ago rude wars were waged about this ridge. The barrow, long or round, marks the burying-place of some warrior of prehistoric Britain, and there are place-names about here and in similar spots which tell the tale; one, for instance, that means 'the field of the dead,' with seven barrows by it. But if one stands to the north-east of this remote and very quiet spot on a certain height which is said to command a view of seven counties, the eye is drawn towards a field of desperate strife which, compared with the vague age of camp and barrow, seems of yesterday for those who have been deep in the story of the civil war in England. That dull brownish patch of ground in the midst of the deep green, fading into purple, seven or eight miles to the north-west, is Greenham Common. Newbury lies hidden in the vale of the Kennet, a mile or two beyond, and a very little to the west of Greenham is the scene of the first battle of Newbury. To roam over the ground, or read the collection

called the 'King's Pamphlets' given by one of the Georges to the British Museum, is to be moved not a little by thoughts of the clash of arms which sounded there just two hundred and sixty years ago.

In the autumn of 1643 Essex was returning to London from Gloucester, which he had succeeded in relieving, when the King hastened from Eversham to Newbury, took possession of the town, and blocked the way to Reading and London between the Kennet and Enborn. Essex, harassed a good deal by Rupert's cavalry on his march from Gloucester, reached Enborn on September 19, and prepared to contest the way across Newbury Wash and Greenham Common on the morrow. His own quarters that night seem to have been at the foot of a ridge which, roughly, runs east and west, with spurs towards the En brook or Enborn on the south and the Kennet on the north. Enborn Heath lies a little to the south of his position, with the brook beyond.

Between the centre of the Parliamentary army and Newbury Wash, its objective, lay a difficult bit of country pierced with lanes and sheltered by hedges. Essex's plan clearly was to push through this ground to Newbury Wash, whilst, by throwing out regiments towards the En brook on one side and the valley of the Kennet on the other, he would guard against any attempt of the enemy at a turning movement on either his right or left flank. Practically the front would cover the space between the two rivers, a mile or so. The baggage was posted on the side of a copse in the rear, with a strong reserve. Essex's plan struck the Royalists as very good, but surely it needed no genius to see that it was his only safe way. Essex was almost desperately short of supplies, and the country was not kindly disposed towards him. To turn back would be to court disaster. If he had tried to avoid the Royalist army by taking his wearied troops across En brook on the night of September 19, he would have found himself not nearer London, not nearer supplies, and in a country difficult to march through. He might have been attacked by Charles then, and driven among the great range of hills in north-west Hampshire, and there have been lost. Straight on, after a few hours' rest, and out into the open, even with Rupert's cavalry lying in wait to charge him there—supposing that the enemy had not been beaten before then—this was the only way.

The night before the battle, in an affair of outposts, a small body of Parliamentary foot had a foretaste of the stern work which was to be theirs next day. These men found their way among the

lanes and hedges of the slope at the foot of which Essex encamped, and strove to enter Newbury Wash at a point near Skinner's Green. But the entrance to the Wash was already guarded by Royalists. Immediately to the north of the point where these Parliamentary skirmishers were driven back, lay some high ground commanding the open country which Essex must make for. The point was thus of the greatest importance, and the omission of the Royalists in not occupying it the night before the battle was to cost them dear. Essex, at any rate, saw the value of the position sooner than they, and at daybreak sent a body of troops to seize it, whilst with a part of the army he advanced among the high-banked hedges and lanes towards the Wash.

When the Parliamentarians were in possession of the high spot the Royalists discovered their mistake. They were astonished, almost scandalised, by what they saw. Lord Digby, in his account of the battle, says ingenuously: 'Instead of the flight which upon all of their former proceedings we had reason to expect, we discovered them settled in the most advantageous way imaginable of receiving us; . . . their foot, their horse, and their cannon planted with much skill, not only for molesting us and preserving themselves, but even for tempting us to assaile them upon these disadvantages!' By now, no doubt, the Royalist army, whose front seems to have covered a line equal in length to Essex's, was in position. It lay along the open ground by the road between Newbury and Andover, and may have been about ten thousand strong. The fighting Byrons, uncle and nephew, hurried up with foot and horse to storm the position secured by Essex's men early that morning; and then began a most desperate and bloody encounter which seems to have raged there all day. Essex himself must have been on the scene and in the thick of the fight before the morning was far spent. He was of the kind who love to lead a charge, and he fought that day in a white hat which made him dangerously conspicuous.

Essex, however, is not the figure, respectable though it be, that the mind's eye seeks eagerly out in that fiery spot on Newbury field. We know that Essex was incorruptible, punctilious, fearless, not wanting in dignity. Here he was fighting with the odds on the whole all against him: for defeat there could be no repair. Yet he does not strike upon the imagination—nor Rupert with his black-clad squadrons of fierce horse; nor Charles anxiously 'riding up and down all day in a soldier's gray coat'; nor the Earl of Carnarvon, type, as the canvas of Vandyke shows, of all

that was graceful in the young cavalier—and in no class of Englishmen at any period has grace been so perfectly manifested as in this. It is on Falkland that our thoughts are mainly set as we picture the scene by the Wash, the fierce fight from hedge to hedge and in the crowded lanes of death. A poplar tree long marked the spot where he is believed to have fallen. Byron, in his account of the battle, gives a plain enough account of his death. 'The enemy had bent on foot out of the close, and was drawn up near the hedge. I went to view; and as I was giving orders for making the gap wider, my horse was shot in the throat, so that I was forced to call for another horse. In the meantime my Lord of Falkland, more gallantly than advisedly, spurred his horse through the gap, where both he and his horse were immediately killed.' Byron writes as the blunt soldier, and to judge by his narrative Falkland might have been fighting that day as one of the dashing young cavaliers like Sunderland or Carnarvon, who rode in high contempt up to the pikes of the stout Londoners on Enborn Heath. But Falkland's thoughts were not bent on glory or on victory now. The mood at Edgehill, when he called for a final charge to end the war, had passed from him. He had learnt to see that a victory, even if it came, could not bring the peace for which he yearned. How clearly he foresaw the long agony of the strife is shown in the words Whitelock tells us he spoke on the morning of the battle. He said he foresaw much misery to his country, and was weary of the times, but believed he would be out of it before night. He dressed himself on the morning of the battle with care, 'as one,' says Gardiner, with one of those flashes of insight with which his work is lighted up, 'who had leisure to think of the seemliness of his attire, because he alone of all in those hosts had set his mind on something else than the winning of victory.' There is not a shadow of doubt that Falkland courted death at Newbury. True, a carelessness of his life on the field had been already remarked of him more than once; he even made excuse for it on grounds of high policy, urging that it was necessary in the public interests that one who was known to desire peace greatly might not be suspected of desiring it for fear of his own life. But even so his act at Newbury in riding at a narrow gap through which the bullets of the musketeers were raining cannot be thus explained. As the historian has said, it was a deed not far removed from suicide. But is there a human judge privileged to censure Falkland for his conduct that day? The fine flower of patriotism blossomed in Falkland as in few

others even of that age. Alas, that it should have taken a form that could not but be wasted and crushed out at such a time! With all his learning, spiritual glow, and serene intelligence, Falkland was ill-equipped to guide England in those days. Elemental force rather than sweetness of reason drives a country in paroxysm. There is nothing of the man of destiny about Falkland. His charitable idea for a tolerant Church comprehensive enough to embrace all jarring religious sections was as little likely to appeal to the England of 1643 as Chillingworth's disquisition about the Roman engineers to the rough cavalier soldiers in Arundel Castle during Waller's siege. But this impracticableness in Falkland takes nothing from the fragrance of his memory. We must perhaps look back to the Elizabethan age to find a personality that matches his in glamour; and even then does Raleigh quite equal Falkland in this?

Falkland lay where he fell, all that day, unmissed, the battle surging and deepening around him; now the Royalists having the upper hand, driving back their foes; presently in turn the soldiers of Essex winning back more than the ground they had lost, till in the end in all probability they did manage to plant themselves on the western edge of the Wash. It was here, about the centre, that the struggle was most deadly throughout. Once a body of cavaliers, hot in pursuit of a broken regiment of foot, was caught in a deep lane by the musketeers lining the hedges, and destroyed. Mr. Money in his book, '*The Two Battles of Newbury*,'¹ tells of a local tradition that at one time a lane was so full of the slain that the bodies had to be removed before an advance could be made.

Meanwhile, on Enborn Heath the London trained bands, forming Essex's extreme right, two regiments of foot supported by horse, were put upon their mettle with a vengeance. Rupert brooked no delay. He would not wait for the chance to overwhelm the foot in the centre so soon as they struggled through the lanes and attempted to deploy on the open ground. His cavalry mounted the hill which the trained bands occupied, and scattered

¹ Mr. Money's book was published about twenty years ago. It is an admirable piece of work, from which Professor Gardiner derived much aid. But I cannot help agreeing with him that Mr. Money represents Essex at the end of the day too much in the light of a victorious general. It is not clear to me that the movement by which he considers the left wing of the Royalists was turned was effected. Undoubtedly the Royalists drew off in the night much discomfited, partly perhaps through shortness of ammunition; but I cannot picture anything in the nature of a rout.

the horse with a charge or two. Rupert found it quite another matter when he charged the foot, the raw London militia who so far had seen little service 'beyond the easy practice of their postures in the artillery garden.' This body stood the shock of battle firm as a rock. The Royalist writers admitted so much. Clarendon says they 'behaved themselves to wonder.' 'For, give them their due,' says Digby, 'they shewed themselves like good men.' Rupert himself led the choicest of his cavalry against these tough soldiers, but, says the Royalist historian, all in vain; he had to wheel about. The troopers could no more break through the hedge of pikes than could Napoleon's cavalry through the squares at Waterloo. Many of Rupert's men must have fallen here, especially the 'young blades' who were the first to rush in. Among these was the magnanimous Carnarvon. Eachard, the historian, says that Charles II., who was present with his father that day, and who visited the field a few years after the Restoration, declared this young cavalier the finest gentleman he ever saw. That morning Carnarvon had been one of a group of gay cavaliers measuring the gates at Newbury to see if the horns of Essex would pass through. At night his body was brought in a cart into the town. The Londoners, it is certain, were never beaten, though assailed so hotly by horse if not by foot. They withdrew a little from the heath after a time to the cultivated land, but in perfect order. Their firm stand determined the result of the battle. Had they run before Rupert, it is hard to see how Essex, his right flank turned, could have escaped a crushing defeat.

Both Foster and the 'Parliamentary Scout' say that the fight continued till midnight; but it was no doubt desultory after dark, carried on amid the glimmer of the matches, and confined to musketeers about the hedges and enclosed land. The number of men killed must have been larger than several contemporary accounts allow for. But clearly both sides underrated their own losses, whilst Digby's statement that the Parliamentarians lost half their number can no more be accepted than his boast that they were repulsed at all points. Every care was taken not to hearten the enemy by admission of failure. To unravel completely the tangled skein of this battle, fought largely in the lanes and among the hedges, might be very hard, even if the authorities were less partial. But at least no Royalist writer tried to gloss over the fact that Essex was able next day to gather together his army and baggage, and march on Reading.

Of Newbury, Falkland remains the pathetic figure of enduring interest. Deeper, however, in historical significance is the conduct of the London trained bands that day, the men of the metwards. The campaign diary kept by one of their number, Sergeant Foster, has the usual flavouring of sanctimony. But in these men there was the stuff that comes of deep conviction which a great State has need of. When Cromwell was able to model his army and make it the equal in character of the men whom the rush of Rupert's troopers on the Heath never shivered, the result of the war could no longer be in the faintest doubt.

GEORGE A. B. DEWAR.

Boxer.

SHE was an odd-looking mare, a dreamer. But then, she had seen her best days, and she was good enough for Ned o' Caff's. A derisive tradition had it that, when he first led Boxer up the hill to Habershaw, she stopped half-way and said 'Oh.' That happened, if it did happen, six or eight years ago, and Ned himself allowed that she might now be getting on in life. So was he, however.

People never looked at Ned's 'owd galliwer' from his practical point of view. He had to have a quiet horse, one that could be left. Boxer stood with one ear cocked and her hind feet rather widely planted. 'Does ta think,' they asked him, 'at horses iver has paralysis?' Some folk will be trying to say things, but the mare was right enough. She had to make the best of half a pair of blinders, and prop a cart that very likely felt a bit rickety. Ned found it so himself, after patching it to the best of his ability with orange boxes. They made a mock of her old bones. 'Ther' seems to be more ner euzhal, Ned. See yo', ther's one here. Summat out o' place, thinks ta?' But the old man might have been puzzled to tie his harness on securely to a smoother horse. He made no answer.

The flies bothered her, settling round her eyes in black rings; but he always found her as he left her. Asleep? Not she! 'Wup, Boxer!' he said quietly, and the creature shuffled along beside him like a dog, listening with the one pricked ear to a tune he hummed. Sometimes he brought her back the outside leaves of the cabbages, stripped off by a decent customer; and Ned let her have them at once from his hand. Or it might be a feed of sweet short grass cut from a lawn. 'Thou'rt noane asleep, lass, art a?' Ned would say. 'Nou, my word.'

A ribald passer-by said once, 'She were prayin', owd lad. I saw her knees bend.'

'Tworn't for her awn sins, then,' he answered.

The hawker steadied her down the hills and sometimes pushed her up the hills, and got her home at bedtime. She stood through the night in an old wooden shanty, with two sacks across her back to keep her dry if it rained.

He untied her and said, 'Now, then, thou'll want to know what we've addled. Thou's done weel to-day, Boxer, lass. Let's see. . . . Nay, ther's nowght i' t' manger. Come, I'll sit me down wi' the'. Now, then. . . . Nineteen penn'orth o' copper. That's one an' sevenpence. Ea. I s'ould hev a shillin' i' t' waistcoat pocket, an' that'll mak' hauf-a-crown an' a penny. . . . I wish thi owd bones 'ould let the' lig down. . . . It's reight, it's two an' sevenpence, missis! I'll gie the' a reek o' 'bacca, mun I? Three draws. Ea. My owd wench liked a reek o' 'bacca, when she lived. . . . Eh, dear-a-dear!'

When Boxer sniffed the pipe she puffed out a long breath, and if there was light enough Ned saw her old lip quiver.

'Thou're a bit jealous o' t' owd wench. What? Niver heed; I cower wi' thee i' these days. . . . I fear thou'll dee afore I do. Thou's gitten raither wankly, Boxer. Ea. But thou mun ho'd up. . . . We'll see to-morn' if berries be cheap. By Hec, if we do as weel agean I'll get the' a feed o' haver seeds. They'll mak' the' caper. . . . What says ta now tov a soop o' watter, beauty?'

She sighed, and he fetched the bucket. When she had drunk he gave her a pat on the neck and said, 'I'll leave the' to t' rattens.' It was Ned's unvarying good night. The satisfaction he found in saying it had come, no doubt, of thinking that the rats could never rob her.

Dear heart, thou and thy old mare were happy, Ned; no man making you afraid. I do not know that even sickness did it. And that begins the story.

In winter-time Ned missed his wife more seriously, coming home to a fireless grate and a cold bed. He got wet through sometimes, and the end of it was that he had to lie certain weeks on his back. Pneumonia nearly killed him. But Ned came better through it than might have been expected—visited by the parish doctor, nursed by a neighbour, and helped with a load of coal by one kind customer who wondered what had come of him. For three weeks more of convalescence, he drew upon a broken jug with thirteen shillings in it; and, to save the stable rent, he took Boxer into the house.

Boxer was good company. As soon as he got the old mare down four steps into his cellar dwelling, Ned cheered up.

At his reappearance, she had gratified him profoundly by some feeble signs of animation. Boxer moved her feet, and brushed her nose against his waistcoat. His opinion was that she had not stirred for a month, and before she could negotiate the steps he had to walk her in the street awhile. 'Thou'rt down,' he said. 'A week more an' thou'd ha' been petrified.' He set her with her head towards the fire, and, sitting where the pipe-smoke drifted past her nostrils, told her partly what his fix had been. She had to wait for the rest until his strength mended, but meanwhile he reassured her—with promises of getting about again. 'Tak' time,' he said, 'Boxer!'

They got about as he foresaw, but not until Ned was a shilling or two in debt. That came awkwardly. It was between seasons with them, when green vegetables were dear and folk had already laid their coke in. Somebody told a sanitary inspector of Boxer's dirty habits, and Ned, his heart in a maze, saw nothing for it but to part with her.

'Boxer, lass,' he said, 'we're done, I do believe. Owd winter-hedge, they willn't thoil the' house-room.' A winter-hedge is nevertheless a horse that occupies but little space—to wit, a clothes-horse. 'Thou says nowght, but it's a do. . . . It is. I s't be no better if I went to gaol for the'. 'Thou m' finnd another stable.'

He had been served with a notice to abate the 'nuisance,' and shown the peril of non-compliance.

'Look, here's t' paper,' he said, holding it under Boxer's nose. 'Thou cannot scholar't, says ta? Mish, no more can I mysel', owd mate. . . . I wish thou *could* read, for then thou'd know. Thou'd happen tell me what to do. . . . Well! I judge it's a ticket for t' knacker's yard. Thou knows nowght o' that.'

But in the fortnight allowed him by this notice Ned found a purchaser, willing to give him ten shillings for Boxer alive. This was Tip, a fat rag-and-bone dealer who rode on the shafts. It was a bad bargain, for Tip and Boxer both. It might have been worse for Boxer, but the man had heart-disease and feared to excite himself. It was such a shocking bargain for Tip, that on occasions when the mare refused to budge beneath the weight of him, people asked him what he had paid for her, two balloons or three.

Poor Ned in those days hummed no tunes. He came his rounds, or part of them, with a basket, and the toil was too heavy for song had even his heart been lighter. Sad-faced, and grey, and getting feeble, he looked like a man living his life out from

mere habit, without either joy or interest. That was, no doubt, his condition. Content with what kept body and soul together, he often went home before the day was done. It lessened the risk of meeting Boxer. The neighbours saw his light put out at seven and six o'clock, and were aware of something tragical in the old man's solitude. He had gone to his bed. He still conversed with Boxer in his dreams, or lay awake and beat his brains for the means to buy her back again. In vain. The house was always empty, the stable let, the past beyond recall. Day came, and out he trudged again with the basket.

The unfortunate Tip believed the mare was sulky. She often made him walk; and I take it to be impossible that they should ever have liked each other. Walk he could not, very far. A day soon came when he lost all patience, and administered kicks and blows without regard to his state of health. Then Boxer suddenly woke up, and ran away.

Her pace was not so brisk as a trot, nor so free as a gentle amble, but 'twas enough for Tip; it served. She steadily left him behind, and wandered on with his flaunting stock-in-trade to her old quarters. There all day she remained, with her nose, as it were, on the doorstep, while every child in the street had a toy balloon, and some of the wives, though knowing better, came for cups and saucers.

Ned, when he saw balloons so plentiful, divined the cause at once. His old heart gave a monstrous heave. So possibly did Boxer's, for she knew his foot afar and lifted up her voice and whinnied. He reached the open gate of his yard, and there stood, and Boxer was ricking a stiff neck in the effort to look round at him.

'Nay,' he said gravely, after a while, 'thou m' go back.'

She gave no sign; and at the end of a minute her head fell, and her nose swung back to the doorstep. Ned turned away. He drew the back of his hand once or twice across his face. A woman came out of her house, and told him that the horse had been there since morning. Tip must be drunk, she thought. So Ned walked in and laid his hand upon Boxer's withers. On her dusty coat he saw the marks of the stick, and—worse than that—on the inside of one knee a little blood from a bruise.

He showed a sick face. 'See yo',' he said, 'what he's done tul 'er.'

The woman answered, 'Ay, they're not all so soft as thee,' and went indoors. Ned was left alone to realise his cruel situation.

'Nay,' he said again, 'I munnot harbour the'. Thou m' go back tul'im. What, Boxer, owd mare, thou'rt fain to see me! . . . Wha but, I've selled the'. Thou knows me, does-ta-n't? Ea, for seur. Thou does know me, beauty. We've been a deal together, what! Hes he been hooinin' the'? . . . I'd buy the' back but I' no brass. I know not if I s' live, more ner a week or two.'

He fished out his key and entered the house, to fetch a huge cake of bread out.

'Here's summat for thi owd hay-bag,' said he, and seated himself beside the sunk steps to break it and feed her. It was his supper cake. Boxer mumbled it, and he caught the crumbs for himself. 'Thou munnot think for this 'at I mean to keep the'. I mak' the' welcome, that's what. . . . Now, it's grand, isn't it? I s' wager thou's hed nowght like that off Tip. That wants no chewin'. I expect thou's down to t' gums, raither, like me. . . . Lump o' savagery! . . . This 'll stick i' thi ribs a bit. But I'll pawse his heead off! Ea, I'll sooin saddle that grosh lump. Thou'll see summat laughable. . . . What, no more on't! Nay, then, thou'rt saucy.'

That was the fact. The mare refused her food and hung a tremulous lip. Persuasions failed altogether. On consideration, Ned had no doubt that this manner of feeding her, in the yard instead of the stall, was the cause of her want of appetite. He put the cake in his pocket at last, and sat without a word.

Half an hour went by, and the lamp-lighter. The street grew busy with the racket of iron-shod clogs as the mills 'loosed.' Unnoticed, Ned and the mare kept company in silence, tears trickling down the ancient faces of them both—for Boxer was rheumy.

'Now then,' said Ned at last. 'We m' part. I've seen t' final. Oh, Tip's done wi' the', my lady, niver fear. It's thee an' me an' us two, Boxer. We'll just dee. . . . Come thi ways.'

A friendly mill-hand met him in the street, however. 'Stop!' he called. 'Where's ta trailin' that dry carcass, Neddy?'

'Wha,' said the old man evasively, 'I judge 'at Tip 'll want to see't agean.'

'Tip wants nowght no more,' the weaver answered. 'Tip's deead. He dropped down wi' runnin' after 't.'

Ned looked white. He held by the shaft, visibly trembling. 'Wha, then——' he faltered.

'It's thine, my lad, an' t' pots an' cart an' all, for that matter. Tip hed nobody, thou knows that.'

'I want nowght of his cart,' cried Ned with vehemence.

'Mash't up for firewood, then,' said the weaver laughing, and passed on.

A little later Ned unharnessed her. Then he went to the gate, and looked about, and waited till the street was clear. Boxer waited too. The door was at last set open for her.

'Now then, owd sweetheart,' Ned said joyfully, 'I'll chance it once. Mak' as little din as ta can, pray do!'

KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN.

Badgers and their Ways.

AT the annual dinner of Lord Middleton's Hounds, held at Malton, in Yorkshire, in May last, Will Grant, the retiring huntsman, made an extraordinary statement. He told his hearers that during the fifteen years in which he had hunted the pack he and his hounds had killed 2,000 foxes, a highly satisfactory record. But he added further that during his last three seasons he or his pack had killed, into the bargain, no fewer than 161 badgers. Badgers are, evidently, plentiful enough in Yorkshire, and these animals are by no means beloved of fox-hunting folk; yet it passes the wit of the average sportsman and lover of wild life to understand why, in three seasons, Lord Middleton's huntsman should have destroyed this huge number of a beast which has not only become comparatively rare in Britain, but which is, after all, one of the most harmless as it is one of the most interesting of our native fauna.

Huntsmen have usually a strong prejudice against badgers, claiming that not only do they at times dispossess the fox of its earth, but that they will, on occasion, even destroy young cubs. These charges are based upon very slender evidence. Now and again it may have chanced that a badger has turned a fox out of an earth; but it is pretty certain, on the other hand, that the fox displays exactly the same tactics, and takes to himself the home and abiding-place of some badger and his mate. Occasionally it has happened, where the earths are large, that both fox and badger have been found occupying the same fastnesses. The badger, notwithstanding the fact that it has a strong smell of its own, set up by a white substance exuded from a gland, is a beast of extremely cleanly habits, and it is said that the fox occasionally drives it from its earth by rendering that ordinarily well-kept apartment uninhabitable—at all events by a badger.

Some years ago, in a place where a pair of foxes and a pair of badgers dwelt in the same covert-side, the vixen produced a

family; one morning one or two of the cubs were found outside the earth, dead. It was stated that in each case the skull of the infant fox had been bitten through, and the badgers were instantly accused of being the murderers. There was no direct evidence upon the point, and a Scottish jury would probably have found the accusation 'non-proven.' One of the badgers may have committed the crime; but, on the other hand, it may not. Some wandering dog may not impossibly have done the mischief. Anyhow, the stigma has remained, rightly or wrongly, with the badgers, and the case is often cited to the infamy of a very harmless and inoffensive race of animals by fox-hunters and their adherents.

Fox-hunters, in addition to their ancient and inborn suspicion of the badger, have for ages been accustomed to enter their young hounds to this quarry. Beckford, in his instructions upon the education of the young entry, writes as follows: 'I know an old sportsman who enters his young hounds first at a cat, which he drags along the ground for a mile or two, at the end of which he turns out a badger, first taking care to break his teeth; he takes out about two couple of old hounds along with the young ones, to hold them in. He never enters his young hounds but at vermin, for he says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."'

A sporting writer of Charles the Second's time—Nicholas Cox—has somewhat to say upon the same topic. 'If she' (the badger) 'be hunted abroad with Hounds, she biteth them most grievously whenever she lays hold on them. For the prevention thereof, the careful Huntsmen put great broad collars made of *Grays'* (badgers') skins about their Dogs' Necks. Her manner is to fight on her Back, using thereby both her Teeth and her Nails, and by blowing up her Skin after a strange and wonderful manner she defendeth herself against any blow and Teeth of Dogs; only a small stroke on her Nose will despatch her presently; you may thrash your heart weary on her Back, which she values as a matter of nothing.'¹

Poor badger! for centuries he has been one of the most persecuted of all beasts in Britain. In baiting with young dogs some of the vilest cruelties were formerly perpetrated upon him. For instance, the lower jaw of the poor brute was occasionally sawn off, so that the unfortunate beast should be rendered harm-

¹ As a matter of fact, the most vital part of the badger's anatomy is at the back of the head. A blow there will easily kill this animal.

less when fastened up in a barrel and there attacked by his oppressors. The very term to 'badger' shows but too plainly the infamous treatment that this most inoffensive and luckless animal has been accustomed to receive from countless generations of brutal folk. It is something to our credit that we have put down such cruel pastimes as bull-baiting, cock-fighting, badger-baiting, and the like; yet it is clear that the badger, although he lives in somewhat happier times than formerly, has still a good many foes. It is surely no achievement by any pack of hounds that they should have destroyed 161 of these peaceful animals in the space of three seasons! There is no great harm in killing a badger with foxhounds when found in the open, an incident that not infrequently happens (last season the Pytchley killed two in one morning); but 161 of these beasts slain in three seasons by a single pack of hounds—it is a slaughter scarcely to be justified even by the master and huntsman of a badger-infested country!

A season or two back a pack of hounds, the Axe Vale, were got together in the West of England to hunt badgers by night. Ten and a half couples were used, and very good sport was shown. At first moonlight nights were chosen, but it was found that hounds ran just as keenly in black darkness as by the light of the moon. On these occasions the master and whippers-in wore belts and carried policemen's lanterns. This may be classed as legitimate sport; and in wild country, where badgers are plentiful, there can be little harm done in keeping the animals down in this way. There are, however, few parts of England where badgers are ever sufficiently numerous to warrant the pursuit of them in this manner. The Axe Vale, by the way, during a fortnight's hunting in the spring of 1902, killed seven old badgers and ran other two to ground, so that their country must have been well stocked with these animals. Country people and dog fanciers have rather a senseless predilection for digging out badgers and killing them. This is, probably, a relic of the barbarous 'badgering' craze of our rude ancestors. There is little of sport or pleasure in the business. The badger is much worried but seldom killed fairly by the dogs employed. He is usually slain by a blow with a heavy bludgeon, and his remains go to decorate—or otherwise—the bar-parlour of a publican, or perhaps the shop of some sporting hairdresser. Surely our British badger deserves a better fate than this? Why not leave him alone—he harms no man—and let him inhabit his quiet countryside in peace?

Badgers belong to the great weasel tribe (*Mustelidae*), and are

not at all closely allied, as some people seem to suppose, to the bears. Among their more or less distinguished relatives may be named the wolverine, the otters, skunks, ratels, martens, polecats, and weasels. Various races are found in different parts of the world, including the sand-badgers of the East, natives of India, the Malay Peninsula, Java, Sumatra, and Borneo. The true badgers (*Meles*) are found in Europe, Asia northward of the Himalayas, Persia, and Japan. In Africa and India are to be met with the curious ratels, a remarkable branch of the family, distinguished by their extraordinary fondness for honey. To obtain this luxury they spend most of their time, when not in their earths, in hunting for the nests of wild bees. Having discovered these, they proceed to rifle the combs. They are absolutely oblivious—as are our English badgers—of the stings of the infuriated bees, their tough, thick, and loose coats protecting them from any serious injury. No doubt, too, after thousands of years of honey-plundering, they are practically immune to the attacks of their victims. Ratels are strong and very courageous beasts. The Boers of South Africa hold them in high respect—as do the natives—and assert that a pair of these beasts will occasionally attack a human being. I have heard of men being treed by these animals, but whether the tale was true or false I am uncertain. What is certain is that the ratel, or honey badger, of South Africa is a beast extremely difficult to kill, by reason of his tough constitution, good defensive powers, and extraordinarily loose coat, and that he is, when meddled with or put out, a beast of very high courage and unpleasant manners.

Our English badger, known of old by such various names as Brock, Gray, Boreson, and Bauson, measures, in a good specimen, as much as two feet six inches in length. He will weigh certainly up to thirty-five pounds, possibly more, in exceptional instances. Pennant, the well-known naturalist of the eighteenth century, had a tame badger (a male) which weighed thirty-four pounds. In November last Mr. Arthur Heinemann, master of the Cheriton Otter-hounds, unearthed a pair of badgers near Exford, in North Devon, which weighed respectively thirty-three pounds (the boar) and thirty-four pounds (the sow.) There is absolutely no good reason for supposing that even these weights are not sometimes exceeded.

As a rule the badger makes its home in a snug and deep earth, often having several chambers. In this earth, having made a comfortable bed of grass, hay, and leaves, it passes the whole

day, mostly sleeping away its time. Occasionally, however, this animal will rear her young above ground. During the spring of this year (1903) while cutting a thick gorse covert in Staffordshire, the people at work came on a litter of five young badgers lying in a shallow nest, with no other protection than the natural seclusion of the covert. The badger's habits are essentially nocturnal, as well as very shy and secretive, and not until after evening has fallen does it stir abroad. At night it is very active and very wideawake, rambling for long distances in search of food and for exercise. It is an omnivorous eater, and when sharp-set will no doubt devour almost anything. But chiefly it preys on slugs, worms (of which it is very fond), beetles, moles, and various roots, bulbs, herbs, fruits, and vegetables. It is partial to the bulbs of the wild hyacinth, and roots up many a plant. It is, too, extremely fond of wild strawberries, and anyone possessing a tame badger and a good strawberry bed will do well to see that his pet is not allowed the free run of the garden while this fruit is about. The badger is also a great epicure in eggs, and much of the hostility of gamekeepers to this animal lies undoubtedly in the fact that it will, when it gets the chance, devour a whole nest of partridge or pheasant eggs. Badgers are said also to be fond of honey; and knowing the extraordinary craving of their South African cousin, the ratel, for this delicacy, I should say it is not improbable that they may occasionally partake of it. It is certain that these animals have a particular liking for the nest and larvæ of wasps and wild bees, digging down with strong feet and infinite perseverance till they attain their object. In the captive state a young badger was brought up on a diet first of the milk of a retriever bitch, by which it was foster-mothered, afterwards of eggs and milk, then of fish and meat. It approved of bread and potatoes, when crumbled up and mixed with milk. It would occasionally eat shot birds, and once, getting into a hen-house, killed five chickens. These animals are said by keepers to kill and devour freely young rabbits; that they do partake of this fare at times is, I think, certain; but that they destroy any very considerable number of rabbits in the course of the year is more than doubtful. Still, the badger is carnivorous in his tastes, and is not, even by his kindest friends, to be absolved from devouring at times tender rabbits and even the young of game birds when he can get hold of them.

In hard winter weather the badger lies much in its earth, hibernating for long periods much after the fashion of the bear,

and sleeping, like that animal, with one paw in its mouth. At this season the beast closes up the mouth of its den, and slumbers away its time for many days, even weeks together. In milder weather it ventures forth again in search of food. Snow it detests, and its footprints are very rarely to be noticed among those of other creatures, furred and feathered, when the land lies sheeted in a garment of spotless white. These animals are good swimmers; and a tame badger, thrown into the water, will strike out and make its way to land aptly and well. But apparently they do not take readily to water on their own account and in the wild state. In the business of digging, the badger is one of the finest exponents in the world, making its way underground, even amid the greatest obstacles, with a strength, celerity, and perseverance that are truly marvellous. I have always regarded the *aardvark*, the ant-eater of South Africa, as the champion digger of the animal kingdom, having been witness of some of his exploits; but the badger takes a very high place in the art of getting under ground. A captive badger, unless very carefully looked after, will make its escape from what seem impossible situations. The sportsman-naturalist, St. John, one day found a badger in a trap, not much injured. Tying a rope to its hind leg, he drove the animal home—strange to say, the captive beast jogging steadily along in front of him, and giving little more trouble than a pig going to market. On reaching home, the animal was put for the night into a paved court, where it seemed perfectly secure. 'Next morning,' says St. John, 'he was gone, having displaced a stone that I thought him quite incapable of moving, and then, digging under the wall, he got away.'

A badger will not only locate with extraordinary acumen, but will dig up with immense quickness, moles in their earths. It is probable that the animal obtains some fair proportion of his flesh diet from this source; he has, however, many little plans for achieving the luxuries that he fancies at various seasons: he will, for example, make his way to a rookery in springtime and pick up and devour young rooks that have fallen, as they often will do, out of the nest. Once having fixed upon the site of its earth, the badger excavates with astonishing rapidity. In this operation it does not, however, have recourse to the plan vouched for by our friend Nicholas Cox, author of *The Gentleman's Recreation*, who, writing in 1677, makes the following extraordinary statement: '*Badgers*, when they Earth, after by digging they have entered a good depth, for the clearing of the Earth out, one of them falleth on

the Back and the other layeth Earth on the Belly, and so taking his hinder feet in his Mouth, draweth the Belly-laden *badger* out of the Hole or Cave, and having disburdened herself, re-enters and does the like till all be finished.' Truly our ancestors had some marvellous ideas on the subject of natural history !

At birth the mother badger produces from three to five young, which are born blind. These animals are credited with having a very faithful affection for one another, which, knowing the very close attachment that a tame badger will form for the person whom it looks upon as its master, one can very easily credit. Buffon relates the following anecdote: 'Two persons were on a short journey, and, passing through a hollow way, a dog which was with them started a badger, which he attacked and pursued, till he took shelter in a burrow under a tree. With some pains they hunted him out, and killed him. Being a very few miles from a village called Chapelatière, they agreed to drag him there, as the Commune gave a reward for every one which was destroyed: besides they purposed selling the skin. Not having a rope, they twisted some twigs and drew him along the road, by turns. They had not proceeded far when they heard a cry of an animal in seeming distress, and stopping to see from whence it proceeded, another badger approached them slowly; they at first threw stones at it, notwithstanding which it drew near, came up to the dead animal, began to lick it, and continue its mournful cry. The men, surprised at this, desisted from offering any further injury to it, and again drew the dead one along as before; when the living badger, determined not to quit its dead companion, lay down on it, taking it gently by one ear, and in that manner was drawn into the midst of the village: nor could dogs, boys, or men induce it to quit its situation by any means, and, to their shame be it said, they had the inhumanity to kill it, and afterwards to burn it, declaring that it could be no other than a witch.' Whether this narrative is fable or fact it is hard to say: there seem to be elements of possibility about it, knowing the curiously dogged nature of the badger and its great capability of affection.

Badgers in captivity are not often seen; yet, when taken quite young and reared, they become very interesting pets. I once knew a tame badger which was, in its way, one of the most interesting and amusing beasts I ever met with. It had been brought up from infancy with a tabby kitten, and the two, as they grew older, developed a warm friendship. Their evening gambols were most amusing, the cat with her sprightly and

active ways and the badger with his odd gait and ludicrous, old-fashioned manners forming the oddest contrast. The badger, however, is a far quicker and livelier beast when it is excited or interested than most people would suppose. One of the greatest treats to this animal was a small pot of earthworms, and a ramble over the lawn on a dewy summer's evening when the big lobworms were abroad was always keenly appreciated. This badger had an extraordinary attachment to its master, who had dug it out of its earth as a baby, brought it home, and looked to its rearing. Him it would allow any liberty. He could take it up, play with it, carry it—in short, do whatever he pleased with it. It came to his call, and 'Bill,' as the animal was named, would follow him about the house, into his study, anywhere. 'Bill' knew the rest of the family and treated them with respect; but it cared for none of them as it did for its master. Of strangers it took almost no notice. It lived in a kennel, and was extremely nice and cleanly in its habits. Badgers are sometimes troubled with ticks, especially behind the ears, but these can be readily got rid of by the application of paraffin, carbolic, or vinegar. Bill had a weakness for hens' eggs, and a sharp look-out had to be kept on him in respect of this failing. His food consisted chiefly of dog biscuit, a little meat at times, bones, small birds, worms, and various roots and vegetables. He was fond of an apple occasionally. Usually he slept much during the daytime, always waking up towards evening, and being then extremely frisky and full of life. Occasionally he would wander off for a whole day on his own account, drawn, no doubt, by the primeval attraction of the woods and fields.

Another tame badger, mentioned in a Swedish magazine of last year, struck up a great friendship with two dogs, with one of which it occasionally hunted in the woods. High times the two beasts must have had from the combination of their respective hunting talents. After one of these excursions the badger is described by the translator as returning 'quite tired out, and in a very bad humour.' This badger would never follow a stranger, and hardly anyone but her owner. 'If she wanted to go through a door which she could not open either by pushing or pulling, she would seize hold of someone's clothing—for choice a lady's dress—with her teeth, and draw them towards the door, with the evident intention of getting them to help her.' Another tame badger, next mentioned, was clever enough to manage an awkward latch and let herself out of the yard.

Mr. E. Lort, writing in the *Field* some time since, gave some extremely interesting particulars of this other tame badger, which he reared from the age of about three months. This animal, named 'Sally,' was at first somewhat difficult to tame, refusing to eat for a fortnight. She was ultimately tempted by a fresh rabbit's liver, finely chopped. Finally she became quite tame and greatly attached to her master. At first it seemed hopeless to try to tame her; 'when she was not rolled up in a touch-me-not sort of ball, she was snapping and biting at everything.' 'There was nothing for it but to tackle her in a determined way, and this I did,' says Mr. Lort, 'by getting hold of her by the scruff of the neck—not by any means an easy thing to do, for she could so raise the muscles of her neck that her skin became perfectly tight and rigid. . . . The taming of Sally was not accomplished without painful proof of the strength of the badger's jaw. An 18-lb. badger hanging to the ends of one's fingers a time or two is, to say the least of it, calculated to make a serious impression. Those who have had their digits shut in a door will best realise the sensation.' The jaws of a badger form, as a matter of fact, the strongest part of its anatomy. Not only are they armed with thirty-eight teeth—although usually, owing to the shedding of the first premolars at an early age, thirty-four teeth only are present—but the lower jaw is so strongly articulated to the skull that it cannot be separated without fracture. The sharp, strong teeth are so placed in the jaw that they lock together with the closeness and tenacity of a vice. Once the badger gets its grip firmly fixed, it is a hard matter indeed to make it relax that terrible hold; and, in the old days of baiting, many a terrier lost one of its jaws, clean torn away by its persecuted and relentless adversary. It is small wonder, indeed, that the badger is so formidable a foe to dogs and other adversaries.

Mr. Lort occasionally took Sally on slugging expeditions into fields of long aftermath. In these she delighted; 'and now,' says her owner, 'when I see in the early morning a track all over the grass fields like that which a broom would leave upon the dew, I know badgers have been hunting for worms; and I can see the shiny places where they, like Sally, have pressed their noses hard into the turf.'

When the worms are retreating into the ground, the badger gets its nose right down on to the soil, and sucks and tugs until its slippery plunder is compelled to yield itself and come away.

This same badger was utilised as a 'drag' for a pack of hounds.

'I used to take her for a long walk,' says her owner, 'after giving strict injunctions that the hounds should not be unkennelled until I came to say Sally was safe in her yard, and as a further safeguard, notwithstanding her tremendous weight, I always carried her the first and last part of the way. She weighed twenty-six pounds at her best (or rather worst, for it was most difficult to keep her down), and was a solid dead weight, most tiring to carry, though she kept quite still and often fell asleep under my cape.' These few instances will show how tame this animal, normally one of the most shy, suspicious, and retiring of all our wild British fauna, will become, with care, patience, and good treatment.

Sixty years ago, St. John, in his delightful *Wild Sports of the Highlands*, wrote of the badger as likely to become soon extinct in England, although it might survive much longer in the wild and unpeopled North. That prophecy has, happily, not been fulfilled. There are plenty of badgers still pursuing a quiet and happy existence in many parts of England. If huntsmen and keepers and casual sportsmen will give them but fair play and something like a chance for life, there is no reason whatever why these curious animals should not be found flourishing in this country for at least another century.¹

H. A. BRYDEN.

¹ Since correcting the proof of this article, I have heard from Lord Middleton and his late huntsman, Will Grant, in reply to inquiries of mine on this subject. Lord Middleton tells me that his country is overrun with badgers, and that these animals have greatly increased during the last quarter of a century. He adds that they are mischievous and do harm in many ways. Even from the point of view of the foxhunter, however, this extirpation of badgers seems to me a trifle unreasonable. Grant informs me that he has killed as many as four badgers in one day, with hounds, and has dug out as many as eight (old and young) from one earth. He conducts his digging operations in the summer time.

*Nature's Comedian.*¹

BY W. E. NORRIS.

CHAPTER V.

THE TENANTS OF THE MANOR.

IN consequence of a sudden burst of very hot weather, Sir Joseph Gardiner, having secured a pair for the remainder of the Session, left London and betook himself to the peaceful seclusion of Kent. He was a thin little man, with untidy hair of a sandy grey colour, an upturned nose, weak, blinking eyes, and straggling whiskers which met under his chin. Negligible from a social point of view and very generally neglected, he nevertheless counted for something in the political world, inasmuch as he was wealthy and could speak with a certain ludicity and force, both in the House and out of it, when required to do so. This did not often happen, and the rarity of his utterances added no doubt to their weight. He would not, of course, have been where he was, or what he was, had he not possessed considerable business capacities; but he had for some years retired from active commercial pursuits, and his leisure hours were now divided between the perusal of Blue-books and the arranging, weeding, and perfecting of his celebrated collection of postage-stamps. He was a charitable, harmless, taciturn mortal, who had the appearance of only asking to be let alone, which modest demand on his part was almost invariably granted by both his family and his friends.

On this occasion, however, his wife was, by a mere coincidence, accompanying him to Dunville Manor. Lady Gardiner, who was stout, felt the heat a good deal, and was, moreover, tired of entertaining in London, a duty which was at no time particularly enjoyable to her. It was, therefore, Sir Joseph's privilege to be

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accommodated in the saloon carriage which she had ordered to be in readiness at Charing Cross (Sir Joseph, when alone, usually travelled second-class), and perhaps he would have valued that privilege more highly if he had not shared it with her ladyship's numerous dogs. A couple of Schipperkes, a black Spitz, an Aberdeen terrier, and a Dandie Dinmont—all young, lively, and under no sort of control—are ill fitted to act as travelling companions to the elderly; but Lady Gardiner did not seem to be in the least disturbed by their vociferous encounters, while her spouse was well aware of the futility of remonstrances. Not a word was exchanged between the two human occupants of the carriage until the journey was half over, when Sir Joseph, with the air of having suddenly remembered something, said, 'My dear!'

'Hullo!' responded Lady Gardiner drowsily from behind a newspaper.

'What about Josephine? Did I understand you that she was going abroad?'

Lady Gardiner dropped her paper, yawned, and stroked her chin reflectively. 'Let me see; what was it that she told me last night? Either that she was going or that she had changed her mind; I really can't remember.'

'She remains in London, then, for the present?'

'I suppose so. I shouldn't think she would come down to Dunville, anyhow; there isn't anything for her to do there, you know.'

'Doesn't it seem rather odd,' hazarded Sir Joseph, after an interval of silence, 'for a girl to be living in London all by herself? When I was young——'

'Oh, my dear man, what is the use of harking back to pre-historic times? Josephine is all right. Odd, if you like; but that's what she purposely goes in for being, and her oddity isn't of a kind to cause anxiety. Would you mind asking Billy to stop teasing Chatterbox? He won't bite you if you take hold of him firmly. Oh, not like that, bless your soul! You should have gripped him by the scruff of the neck and the tail. Now you *will* get bitten, and I must say it serves you right!'

A general scrimmage, in which Lady Gardiner was compelled to take part, ensued, and the interrupted discussion was not resumed when peace, with some loss of breath all round, had been restored. It was in truth very little the habit of this detached, yet not unfriendly, pair to discuss their only child, whose independence of them both had been for some time past an accom-

plished and accepted fact. Sir Joseph, being an old-fashioned person, had intermittent qualms; but Lady Gardiner had come to a comfortable understanding with her daughter. 'You can't have it both ways, you know,' she had remarked. 'If you choose to strike out a line for yourself, my responsibility ceases, that's all, and you musn't blame me for any little inconveniences that may come upon you.'

Josephine having willingly undertaken not to be so unreasonable as that, her mother had at once composed herself to slumber.

Lady Gardiner slept a good deal in the course of the day and night. When awake, she found occupation chiefly with her pets, for she had monkeys and parrots, as well as dogs, and although age and bulk had put a stop to her riding, she still took great interest in the stable. By birth she was her husband's superior, a circumstance to which she never alluded and which she probably never forgot; he had given her ample means, while she had bestowed upon him in return what had once upon a time possessed a certain value for him, admission upon a footing of intimacy into aristocratic circles; the bargain, owing to the amenable temperament of both bargainers, had worked out very satisfactorily, and if they had little in common, overt dissensions between them were unknown. It did not in the least matter, for instance, that Sir Joseph sat in Parliament as an advanced Radical, whereas his wife belonged to one of the most rigidly Tory families in England, nor did they fall out respecting questions of plans and domicile, each being at liberty to form these without reference to the other. In London they scarcely met at all, and at Dunville seldom before the dinner hour; for Lady Gardiner always breakfasted upstairs, and Sir Joseph's appearances at luncheon were rare.

Sir Joseph did not honour that meal with his presence a few days later, when a party of three came up from the Rectory by invitation to partake of her ladyship's hospitality. Lady Gardiner had a genuine esteem for her landlord, and Anne often amused her; she had become after a fashion intimate with them, although she was apt to forget all about them unless some association of ideas, such as her return to Kent, chanced to recall them to her remembrance. She had entirely forgotten their recent bereavement until reminded of it by the sight of Anne's sable attire.

'Oh, yes—your poor mother, to be sure!' she ejaculated, with artless and apologetic candour. 'Perhaps I oughtn't to have asked you to lunch. But there's nobody else, and one must eat

even if the heavens fall, mustn't one? Mrs. Dunville must have been an old woman, too; I recollect her as elderly when I was a girl, and goodness knows I'm no chicken! This, of course, is your distinguished brother, whom I am so glad to meet.'

She held out a fat, jewelled hand to Harold, adding: 'Somebody told me that you were staying at the Rectory, and I thought I should like to see you. Very good of you to come. My daughter gave me an enthusiastic description of you a short time ago. Didn't she hear you sing beautifully somewhere or other? Oh, no; you don't sing, do you? What was it that you did?'

'On that occasion,' answered Harold, smiling, 'I was made to recite; but I can't flatter myself that I recited beautifully.'

'I expect you did, or Josephine wouldn't have cracked you up like that. In such matters Josephine isn't a fool.'

'I am quite sure,' said Harold politely, 'that nobody will ever accuse Miss Gardiner of being that, although her kindness may have led her to praise me beyond my deserts. Has she come down with you?'

He was a little disappointed to learn that she had not, and that Lady Gardiner could not say whether she was coming later on or not. He had already had another and a more severe disappointment in the shape of the information rather maliciously imparted to him by Anne that Lilian Ormond was away from home. It looked as though a rather dreary period might be in store for him.

A most excellent luncheon was in store for him, and this helped to raise his spirits; for he was always appreciative of refinement in the matter of food and drink. He was also entertained by the conversation, which was kept up for the most part by his hostess and his sister, and was of the desultory character habitual to the former. Lady Gardiner and Anne resembled one another in freedom of speech, if in nothing else, and, although allies, they seldom met without exchanging a few home truths. Thus her ladyship was accused of being culpably lazy, indifferent, and self-indulgent, while her accuser had to repudiate as best she might a charge of meddling overmuch in parish matters. Such mutual recriminations did not seem to make them at all angry; perhaps one of them was too fat and the other too tough to mind.

'The puzzle to me,' Lady Gardiner casually remarked, 'is to see your future. So long as your poor mother lived there was a definite place and a definite job for you; but now that she is

gone, and that you have come into your inheritance, and that Mr. Dunville, I suppose, will soon be thinking of marrying—'

'Mr. Dunville,' interrupted Dick from the head of the table, which he had been requested to take, 'doesn't contemplate any step of the kind, I assure you.'

'No man that I ever heard of does; but nine out of ten end by taking it all the same. You will certainly marry—and then what becomes of your sister?'

'She moves up to London and keeps house for me, perhaps,' Harold suggested.

'No she doesn't, thank you,' returned Anne decisively; 'I should enjoy that arrangement as much as you would, which is putting matters strongly. No! I shall stay where I am for the present. I make so bold as to think that there are still some jobs for me to perform; though it is true that I shall have to look out for them; instead of deliberately looking the other way, as some people do.'

Lady Gardiner did not respond to this challenge; the subject had probably ceased to interest her. She said, after a few seconds of silence:

'Mr. Dunville, I wish you would tell me what you think of Billy. Some people say he is rather too much on the leg; but he has taken a couple of first prizes, for all that.'

'Which is Billy?' asked Dick. 'One of these two new Schipperkes, I presume.'

'Yes; the bigger one. His real name is William the Silent, to distinguish him from Chatterbox; but in the family circle he is called Billy, for short. I don't pretend to be very well up in the points of his breed; but I gave a long price for him. Was I swindled, do you think?'

The Rector, who was an acknowledged authority on dogs and horses, called up the whole pack in turn, examined them, gave it as his opinion that Billy was at all events good enough to be very highly commended at any show, and then said:

'Do you know that every one of these dogs is suffering more or less from red itch?'

'Oh, are they?' exclaimed Lady Gardiner; 'how wretched for them, poor dears! That accounts, perhaps, for their scratching so perpetually. They kept waking me up all last night by rattling their hocks upon the floor. What does one do for them when they are afflicted in that way?'

'Well, I'll send you up some ointment this evening; but the

main thing is to give them plenty of fresh air, green food, and no meat.'

'But they won't touch their dinners without meat,' Lady Gardiner objected.

'You may depend upon it that they will after twenty-four hours. You are like those cruel parents who ruin their children by giving in to them.'

A grunt from Anne seemed to intimate that she associated herself with the speaker's sentiments, and Lady Gardiner, replying to her rather than to him, declared:

'I haven't ruined Josephine; I never saw anybody look less like a ruin than she does. As for giving in to her, it was a case of Hobson's choice. Do you suppose that one can put a collar round girls' necks and chain them up to kennels?'

'I should think that, in a metaphorical sense, the thing might be done,' said Anne.

'Ah, well! that only shows how little you know about it, my dear. Now we will leave these two gentlemen to smoke, and perhaps they will join us presently in the stable-yard. I should like Mr. Dunville just to run his eye over the cobs before you go.'

The hint conveyed in the last three words was not lost upon one of the two gentlemen, to whom it was always rather depressing to be treated as a cypher, and who remarked, while he lighted his cigarette: 'One's successors are not over and above ceremonious, are they? Perhaps it is a mistake to have successors—or, at all events, to visit them.'

'Lady Gardiner,' answered Dick, 'is nothing if not unceremonious; she deals with us as she would deal with anybody and everybody. As tenants, she and her husband are all that could be desired; they make no demands and undertake repairs which they are not bound by their lease to undertake. She is extremely charitable, too. Her taking you for a singer was stupid, but it was not meant for swagger or impertinence. She really didn't know.'

'Her ignorance,' observed Harold, laughing, 'constitutes her offence. At least, it would if I cared. But I don't care. Why on earth should I?'

He cared a little; he had grown sufficiently accustomed to adulation to miss it; he was beginning to be bored, and boredom was of all sensations the one which he most detested. When, after an interval, his brother and he obeyed instructions by walking across to the stables, and when, during the tour of

inspection, Lady Gardiner's broad back was persistently turned towards him, he asked himself whether even Scarborough would not perhaps be better fun than this. Fortune, however, was, as it happened, upon the point of turning her wheel in his favour. Mounted on two wheels, a lady who really wished very much to meet him again (though he feared that she entertained no such desire) was speeding towards Dunville Manor, and while Dick and Lady Gardiner were still anxiously examining the cob's near fore-leg, Miss Ormond jumped off her bicycle and joined the group.

Harold, in consequence of his hostess's preoccupation, was the first to greet the new arrival. He said, with unaffected and irrepressible pleasure: 'I *am* glad! They told me you were away from home.'

'I came back last night,' answered the girl, whose responsive smile and slight blush were delightful to him. 'I heard that Lady Gardiner had arrived, but I didn't expect to find you here.'

'I am sure he can't have expected to find himself here,' Anne struck in, 'for he knows very little about horses. But I presume he was invited to luncheon, as I was, in order that Dick, who knows more than most people, might be secured.'

'My dear child,' exclaimed Lady Gardiner, turning round, 'how good of you to lose no time in looking me up! Well, how are you?—and how are all your people? Your father free from gout, I hope?'

Poor Mr. Ormond was seldom free from gout, and if there was one thing more likely than another to bring on an attack of his malady it was the bland good humour with which Lady Gardiner ignored his firm hostility. He abhorred the Gardiners, both as Radicals and as interlopers, he avoided every occasion of meeting them, and only with difficulty had he been prevailed upon to let his wife leave cards at their door; but Lady Gardiner did not seem to care—and in truth did not care—whether he abhorred her or not. He was to her merely an old gentleman who lived somewhere in the neighbourhood and had gout; she would not have remembered even as much as that about him, had not she herself been afflicted with occasional twinges of the same disorder. But she was fond of Lilian, whose hand she now held and patted affectionately, saying:

'Let us go and squat ourselves down somewhere in the shade until it is time for tea. We haven't got to attend to parochial duties in this grilling sun, you and I, like our friends here, thank goodness!'

After that there was nothing for the friends in question to do but to take their leave, although it could hardly be supposed that the poor of the parish had claims upon one of them. That Harold departed with reluctance his eyes announced. It has been mentioned already that he had eloquent eyes, and if they did not announce something more than that when he wished Miss Ormond good-bye, they were, at any rate, meant to do so. He said, gently and wistfully :

‘We shall meet again before very long, I hope.’

To which she replied : ‘Oh, I hope so. You are under a promise to come and call upon us, you know.’

Then he followed his brother and sister out of the stable-yard, and Lady Gardiner remarked : ‘Nice-looking and nice-mannered, but a little short—what is it that he is short of, I wonder? It can’t be breeding ; yet one feels that there is a deficiency somewhere.’

‘I don’t notice it,’ Lilian declared ; ‘I don’t know what you mean. His mother, I think, showed an extraordinary deficiency of natural affection for him.’

‘Maybe she did ; although she was a shrewd old woman, and I seem to remember some story about his having played the deuce all round when he was younger. However, he doesn’t particularly signify, does he? Come and talk to Lord Chancellor. He was so delighted to see me back last night, dear boy, that he tore my cap off and devoured it.’

Having greeted, from a respectful distance, the savage and repulsive baboon to whom Lady Gardiner alluded, and who, in deference to the prejudices of the household, was kept securely chained, Lilian was taken the round of the menagerie ; after which she had to listen to a disjointed, but occasionally graphic, review of recent fashionable intelligence. It was not until late in the afternoon, by which time Lady Gardiner had talked herself sleepy, that she was released. Speeding on her bicycle down the long, winding drive which led from the heights on which Dunville Manor stands to the village, she said to herself that she had shown benevolence to a would-be benevolent old lady, but that her virtue had been its own and only reward. She would very much have preferred to go back to the Rectory with Anne, to have one of those chats with the Rector which she always enjoyed, and also to hear from Mr. Harold Dunville what his plans were. Her desires presented themselves to her in that order, and everybody knows that in all processions the most important participant walks

last. Alas ! how could Harold be otherwise than of importance to her, considering that their eyes had met and that the language of his had been past misunderstanding ? That language might or might not have found an echo in her heart ; but the fact of his having used it was bound in any case to make him important.

It scarcely took her by surprise to find him sauntering past the great iron entrance-gates when she emerged upon the high road ; though his start and joyful exclamation were well feigned, if they were (as of course they were) mere manifestations of his histrionic skill. As a matter of fact, he had been hanging about there for the best part of an hour ; but he said :

‘What luck to have just hit you off ! What can you have discovered to talk about to Lady Gardiner all this long time ?’

‘Oh, I wasn’t called upon to start subjects,’ answered the girl, laughing ; ‘she had plenty of things to talk about.’

‘And people too, I suppose.’

‘Yes, naturally ; but she is very kind-hearted ; she had nothing ill-natured to say about any of them.’

‘Not even about me ? I wonder what she said about me ; for she is sure to have said something.’

‘Not much ; and of course I am not going to repeat what she did say. But why should you care to know ?’

‘I have the sort of curiosity,’ Harold answered, ‘that a forlorn traveller has on entering a strange country, or an unfortunate little boy when he is abandoned by his parents at his first school. One would fain hear whether it is to be peace or war.’

Lilian had got off her bicycle and he was walking beside her up a rather steep hill which skirted the village. As she made no rejoinder, he continued presently :

‘The atmosphere of this neighbourhood seems to me to breathe hostility. Or, if that is too strong a word to use, I will say that you are all disposed to look askance at me. Well, I don’t complain of that. I have been a bankrupt and I am an actor, two circumstances which are unlikely to commend me to the favour of county society. However, I may truly say that I don’t care a straw about county society ; the only thing that I do care about——’

Here he came to so prolonged a pause that his companion had no choice but to say, ‘Yes ?’

‘I was going to say that all I care about is what *you* think of me. I don’t want them to persuade you that I am a scamp. Because I really am not that.’

He had already told her so ; but perhaps, having seen so many people since, he had forgotten it, although she had not. Her reply, at any rate, was entirely satisfactory.

'You may be sure,' she declared, turning her face towards him, 'that if anything is said against you in my presence I shall not believe a word of it. I never do believe what is said against my friends, and even if I did, they would not be the less my friends. One admires people who have never done wrong in their lives ; but it is a little difficult to like them, don't you think so ?'

Thus they walked on together through the lanes, and if Anne Dunville had overheard their conversation, she would have been an angry as well as an anxious woman. Yet Harold was upon his very best behaviour, while Lilian avowed no sentiments to which exception could fairly have been taken by a vigilant chaperon.

CHAPTER VI.

A FACILE VICTORY.

THE REVEREND RICHARD DUNVILLE was considered to be an excellent preacher and may be said to have deserved his reputation ; for he spoke fluently, it was pleasant, as well as easy, to listen to him, and there was never any possibility of misunderstanding what he meant. His sermons, being designed for rustic audiences, were practical, direct, and worded in the simplest language ; his imagery, often very happy, was borrowed from the woods, the fields, and the atmosphere ; the doctrines and standard of conduct which he inculcated were of a nature to come home alike to the educated and the unlettered ; so that the squires of the vicinity and their families gradually dropped into the habit of attending church twice on Sundays. They generally went a second time, that is, when the curate preached in the morning. But inasmuch as Mr. Dunville spoke without notes and with no apparent effort, it was assumed that the preparation of his weekly discourses cost him but little time or trouble. As a matter of fact, he took a great deal of trouble over them and spent many nocturnal hours in getting them into shape ; for he had what his brother was accused by some critics of lacking, the true artistic temperament ; his job had to be a neat job if it was to satisfy him, and every

artist whose art is concerned with the tongue or the pen knows how much harder it is to be lucid than to be ornate.

Consequently, he was pacing up and down his study, with his hands behind his back and a frown upon his brow, when the day on which he had lunched with Lady Gardiner was within five minutes of expiring. Harold, to whom the luxury of going to bed early had the charm of novelty, had long ago retired to rest; but Anne, it seemed, had not; for a brisk rap at the door was followed by her equally brisk entrance, and——

‘Look here, Dick,’ said she, proceeding straight to the point, as her habit was, ‘what is going to be done about this?’

‘About what?’ the Rector inquired, leaning back against his writing-table while his sister seated herself in his armchair.

‘You know what I mean. About Harold and Lil Ormond, of course. You heard what he said during dinner. He is going to Beechwood to-morrow, and, to save time, we may as well take it for granted that he will be at Beechwood on most days of the week henceforth.’

‘That sounds to me like taking a good deal for granted; but what if he is?’

‘Only that there will be trouble if he is. There would be trouble even if he were serious; but he is never serious.’

‘I don’t quite see how you can be sure of that, Anne.’

‘No; and it doesn’t matter, so long as one *is* sure. Now, appealing to him is useless. I tried it just now; I reminded him of what I had said about flirting with Lil and charged him with a breach of contract.’

‘To which, I suppose, he replied that he wasn’t aware of having entered into any contract.’

‘Exactly so. It therefore becomes a question whether you are not in duty bound to put her on her guard.’

‘Oh, dear, no!’ answered the Rector, shaking his head; ‘I am perfectly clear that it is not my duty to do anything of the sort.’

‘Nor your inclination, Dick?’

‘Nor my inclination.’

‘Then all I can say is it ought to be. You have great influence over her, and you know you have. You know also that it would be a disastrous thing for her to lose her heart to Harold. Oh, you needn’t go on shaking your head; for, however chivalrous you may be, you are not a fool. It is pretty certain, I think, that she has not lost her heart to him yet; but she may from one day to

another, unless you speak a word in season. A word from you would go a long way, whereas anything that I might say would be likely to do more harm than good. Now, are you going to speak that word ?'

'Most certainly not. Do you realise that you are asking me to abuse my religious influence over Miss Ormond? I doubt whether it amounts to much; but, such as it is, I am not to employ it in order to put spokes in my brother's wheel. Moreover, there is absolutely nothing against him that I am aware of.'

'But when I tell you that he is not serious!'

Dick seated himself upon the table, swinging his legs and laughing. There were moments when he looked like a boy, and indeed his was one of those rare natures which remain for ever young in the sense that they contrive, by some means or other, to keep themselves unspotted from the world.

'It won't do, my dear Anne,' said he. 'Your intentions are of the very best, but you are suggesting a line of action which isn't straight. And that, I must say, is not at all like you.'

'Well, well!' returned Anne with a sorrowful little laugh, 'perhaps you can guess why I suggest it.'

'Yes, I can guess,' her brother owned, his sunburnt face becoming a little redder. 'So can you guess, perhaps, why I must be the last person in the world to interfere. There is this to be said—that, so far as my own chances are concerned, it makes no difference whatsoever. I believe she is really attached to me, and I hope she always will be; but—the fact remains that I might almost be her father.'

'You couldn't possibly be her father, Dick.'

'I said "almost"; the difference between almost and altogether is so small that it doesn't count. Moreover, I can't really afford to marry; my income is too precarious. Don't look so sad about it; I shall pull through all right, and any pangs that I may have to endure will be no worse than I deserve for having been such an ass as to fall in love at my age.'

'It is a dreadful pity—all of it!' sighed Anne.

'It may be, or it may not; one can never tell. For my own part, I have a much better opinion of Harold than you have.'

'You are going to look on and do nothing, then?'

'I am going, I humbly hope, to behave like a gentleman.'

'H'm! I don't believe *he* is. What one forlornly hopes for is that he may give himself away before the mischief is done; but

it is scarcely safe to count upon that. What you say about your age is sheer nonsense, you know.'

'I am afraid, on the contrary, that it is sheer common sense. Anyway, it is not nonsense about my income.'

Thereupon Anne made proposals which brought down a sharp rebuke upon her. Her means, in truth, were but barely sufficient to render her independent, and she was not so foolish as to contemplate living under her brother's roof after his marriage. Nor was she foolish enough to persist with arguments or to offer condolences. Dick and she understood one another very well indeed, and were united by bonds of affection which stood in need of no verbal support. In her heart she was fain to acknowledge that he was right, that there was nothing to be done, that interference was as much out of the question on his part as it would be unavailing on hers. Nevertheless, she fretted under this obligatory inaction. Why was Harold to have things all his own way?

Harold would have told her that he very seldom got his own way, and that statement would have been the more true because he was so seldom able to ascertain precisely what his own way was. However, he was in no doubt as to the pleasure that it gave him to visit Beechwood Hall, whither, in fulfilment of Anne's prediction, he now began to make his way on most days of the week. The Ormond family took a fancy to him, which was not surprising; for although he took no particular fancy to any of them, save one, he made himself without difficulty pleasant to them all. The choleric head of the house liked what he considered the young man's independent spirit; Mrs. Ormond, a kind-hearted, busy, elderly lady, who was notorious in the county for her active benevolence and her want of tact, told him to his face how delighted she was to find him quite a gentleman; the youths and maidens who completed the establishment, and who rendered it a somewhat obstreperous one when, as now, they were at home for the holidays, unanimously pronounced him 'a good sort.'

'Your people,' he remarked laughingly to Lilian one day, 'were so unprepared to see me behave like an ordinary member of civilised society that they are more than half inclined to make me out a paragon. I don't know whether I ought to be flattered or affronted; perhaps I had better split the difference and be merely acquiescent. After all, I have every reason to be grateful to them, since their amiability enables me to see almost as much of you as I want.'

If he wanted to see more of her than he did, he must have

been insatiable ; but to what lover does not that adjective apply ? Within a very short space of time he became a practically avowed, if not a practically acknowledged, lover. Why Miss Ormond's parents, who, with all their esteem for the Dunville family, would hardly have liked to see their daughter married to an actor, abstained from interference it is a little difficult to say. Possibly, being a good deal engrossed with matters which did not directly concern them, they failed to notice what was taking place under their noses ; possibly they shrank from prematurely snubbing a charming visitor who might never need to be snubbed at all. They could, in any case, have accomplished but little ; for Lilian's heart was quickly won.

This was, for her own sake, a pity, since mortal men are so constituted that they can never set a great price upon what is to be secured at small pains ; but Harold, to do him justice, did not consciously undervalue his prize. That it was his, or might be any day for the asking, he knew, and the knowledge gave him thrills of happiness and exultation which were in no sense the result of gratified vanity. He felt, and often said to himself, that he was altogether unworthy of the girl whom he loved as he had never loved before in his life ; he was quite humble, notwithstanding his beatitude. It was not, however, humility that restrained him, during those golden days, from verbally announcing his passion, but rather an appreciation of them so intense that he was reluctant to bring them to an end. Matrimonial engagements are, alas ! of necessity practical, business-like affairs ; they entail discussions inevitably wounding to the finer feelings ; they call for settlements (what on earth had he to settle upon his future bride ?) and are only too apt—in the event of settlements proving unsatisfactory—to bring about opposition, argument, strife, and sorrow. Perhaps, too, there may have lurked in the depths of his mind some warning memory of how alarmed he had always hitherto been when his love affairs had seemed to be approaching a climax, how invariably he had run away, glad and thankful to have recovered his liberty, shuddering at the narrowness of his escape.

Be that as it may, he kept silence and was happy, Lilian visibly sharing his happiness. Like Harold, she knew that she was loved ; like him, she was in no hurry to conclude that phase of courtship which is the most blissful of mundane experiences ; unlike him, she looked forward with perfect assurance to a blissful future. Day after day they wandered about together,

uninterrupted and unhindered, while the rest of the large home party, who good-naturedly abstained from spoiling sport, played the games appropriate to the season; they exchanged personal confidences of the kind which is always so deeply interesting to those concerned in them and so very much the reverse to everybody else; their eyes met continually, sometimes also their hands; neither of them was destined ever to forget wholly that summer-time of sweet illusion.

In after days one of them dated the first premonitory disturbance of illusion from a certain evening when she was taking leave of Harold under the stone archway which formed the somewhat pretentious entrance to her father's domain. Along the high road, while they were standing there, came a phaeton, drawn by a pair of swift grey cobs which Harold recognised at once as Lady Gardiner's; but it was not Lady Gardiner who held the reins. The driver, whose flaxen hair and dark eyebrows had rendered her noticeable to him on another scene, pulled up as soon as she caught sight of him and greeted him with a familiar little wave of the hand. She likewise greeted Miss Ormond, to whom she called out a trifle patronisingly:

'How are you, Lil? But your face answers for you; you are as fresh as one of your own daisies. Oh, there are advantages about living in the country all the year round, and if I had any looks worth preserving, I believe I would give your receipt a trial.'

In point of looks she was certainly no match for the girl to whom she spoke, but, on the other hand, she was a good deal better dressed than Lilian. Perhaps she was aware of that, and aware also that Harold's trained eye had already begun to draw unavoidable comparisons. Turning to the latter, with as little formality as if she had known him all her life, she went on:

'Won't you come and dine this evening? We have a few people staying in the house whom it might amuse you to meet.'

Glancing at his watch, Harold answered: 'Thanks very much, but I am afraid it is rather too late.'

'Not if I drive you home. That would give you heaps of time to dress even if we dined punctually, a thing which never happens. Jump in, and I will deposit you at the Rectory before you know where you are.'

He obeyed orders; Miss Josephine Gardiner, whose orders were very generally obeyed, would have been much surprised if he had not, and in the present instance it would perhaps have been churlish to meet her proffered civility with a refusal. Neverthe-

less, he was vaguely conscious of having been made to inflict a species of snub upon Lilian, and this irritated him with his companion, who, while she conducted him at a high rate of speed along roads and lanes, appeared to be serenely indifferent to his irritation. She threw disconnected questions and remarks at him over her shoulder, paying little attention to his rather gruff replies.

'Are you going to stay down here until the shooting begins? I haven't made up my mind yet whether I shall or not. It is deadly dull, of course. Restful, though, if rest is what one wants, as I daresay it is in your case. How the sight of such modern sort of people as we are occupying Dunville Manor must jar upon you! Still, in some ways we are less objectionable than we should be if we had always belonged to the county, don't you think so? More suggestive of being transient, I mean.'

'I hope, for my brother's sake, that you are not transient,' Harold said.

'You don't hope it for your own, then? Well, it is true that there is no reason in the world why you should. How have you been enjoying yourself in these benighted parts? Very much indeed? But that is impossible, surely! Oh, I see!'

She laughed a little and resumed, after a short pause: 'Rustic flirtations are all very well, and I remember now having been told in London that you were given to flirting; but I rather hope, do you know, that you won't persevere with this one. Lil Ormond is quite pretty and altogether nice, if she hasn't a superfluity of brains; but you are sure to tire of her soon, and it isn't so certain that she will tire of you. These considerations ought to be borne in mind when it is a mere question of amusing oneself. Wouldn't a dairymaid answer your purpose just as well?'

'If you will kindly allow me to get out,' said Harold, 'I think I will walk the rest of the way.'

'Sorry I can't oblige you,' answered Miss Gardiner imperturbably, 'but if we were to part like this you wouldn't come to dinner, and I want you to come to dinner. Shall I apologise for my impertinence? I am prepared, under pressure, to go that length.'

'I really think,' Harold returned, 'that you owe me an apology.'

'I beg your pardon, then. All the same, my words were words of wisdom, and I am less flippant than you think me. But perhaps you don't very much care what I am?'

'Since you ask me, I don't,' answered Harold, with just a shade too much emphasis to vex her.

'Well,' she coolly rejoined, 'I hope you are going to care. It would be too disappointing to have turned one's back upon the Carpathians for the sake of a person who really didn't care. Anyhow, you are going to take me in to dinner to-night.'

Some two hours later he did take her in to dinner, and, despite the intention of subjugating him which she had as good as proclaimed, despite the contemptuous self-reliance which had provoked him into resolving that he would humiliate her before he had done with her, he found her a fascinating and stimulating neighbour. She devoted her whole attention to him throughout a repast to which twenty more or less distinguished persons sat down; her conversation was not flippant, but was that of a well-informed woman who expressed herself tersely and sometimes wittily; she flattered him by taking it for granted that he was no ordinary man; she solicited his opinions respecting subjects upon which he was hardly qualified to speak authoritatively; she listened to them with appreciative interest, and she never said a word about the stage from start to finish. For the rest, her attire was magnificent, her diamonds, which far outshone her mother's (to whom, as a matter of detail, they belonged) were dazzling; her voice and her whole manner had a certain magnetic attraction.

When, in the course of the evening, somebody asked her to play, she sat down to the piano and displayed a mastery over that instrument which could only be the result of first-class instruction and constant practice; also she talked politics with an ex-Cabinet Minister in a style indicative of her being behind the scenes. She was altogether the most conspicuous figure in a gathering by no means commonplace, and everybody seemed willing to acknowledge her as such. Was she, Harold wondered, showing off her accomplishments?—and, if so, for whose benefit? After dinner he obtained no speech of her until the time came for him to leave, when she said:

'You must look us up again without loss of time, please; I shall be literally pining for you. Besides, you have nothing else to do, I am sure; for I can't imagine that Beechwood is more than a *pis-aller*.'

His taciturn little host trotted out into the hall after him and murmured something about the pleasure of having entertained one of the celebrated actors of the day.

'My celebrity doesn't amount to much,' answered Harold, laughing, 'and I have been trying to forget that I am an actor. Miss Gardiner, when she was so good as to invite me, didn't allude to the circumstance; she gave me to understand that her hospitality was due to a kindly wish to see something of a neighbour.'

'Oh, I don't think it would be that,' said the little man quite seriously; 'Josephine doesn't care much about her neighbours. I think it was only that we were an uneven number for dinner, owing to one of our guests having been called away unexpectedly this morning. She said she would go out and pick up somebody for us; it is really marvellous the way she manages these things! Because of course her coming across you must have been a mere accident.'

(To be continued.)

At the Sign of the Ship.

MOST people must have noticed how a name or a person seems suddenly to select itself out of the crowd, like one set of footsteps out of the multitude in the street, and to haunt us with reiterated reappearances. A few weeks ago I read, carelessly, some reference to James de la Cloche, a natural son of Charles II. by a boyish intrigue. This son was said to have joined the Jesuits, and then to have left them; married; and died young. I took no interest then in de la Cloche, and cannot remember where I read about him. Next I met him in a recent historical work, according to which he remained in religion to the end of his life; nothing was said about his marriage. He was born in Jersey, in 1646 or 1647, the son of Charles and of a noble Scottish lady, unknown. Since then, James has haunted me!

* . *

Next I was led to an essay by Lord Acton, in *The Home and Foreign Review*, No. 1, 1862. Here I learned that a Jesuit Father, Boero, had found a set of papers in the Jesuit archives, which (1863) he published in the *Civiltà Cattolica*.¹ These papers must be genuine. They comprise the autograph of de la Cloche, when he entered the Jesuit training school at Rome in April 1668, and made a list of his two shirts, three collars, and two pair of shoes, a tiny 'swag,' which he may have carried on his back, as he walked to Rome. Also there are two letters of Charles II., of 1665 and 1667, acknowledging this de la Cloche as his eldest son, and promising 500*l.* a year as long as he remains in London and an Anglican. Then, in July 1667, is a Latin document by Christina, Queen of Sweden, attesting the fact that de la Cloche is Charles's son, the King has told her the secret, and that he is joining the Jesuits at Rome: as he did, in April 1668. Next come letters of August 1668, from Charles II.

¹ The tract of eighty pages can be procured separately.

to the General of the Jesuits, Oliva, and to de la Cloche. Charles wants to be secretly reconciled to the Church; he simply loathes Protestantism, he declares; and he desires that de la Cloche shall join him, privately, in London. He hopes later to recognise the young man, and actually gives him, bastard as he is, hopes of succeeding to the British throne! But he may persevere in his religious career if he chooses. On October 14, a letter of the General of the Jesuits, from Leghorn, apprises Charles that de la Cloche has started for England. On November 18, Charles writes a letter to Oliva, carried by de la Cloche. The young man, after transacting secret business at Rome, is at once to return to London. Charles asks the Jesuit to give the youth 800*l.* for expenses, and encloses a bill on himself at six months. The King, like Mr. Bouncer, must have been 'rather short.' At de la Cloche's request, he promises a large subscription, to be paid in a year, to the Jesuit building fund. We never hear another word, by name, about de la Cloche. Father Boero supposes that, under another alias, he lived and died a Jesuit, probably in France, French being his language.

* * *

Now, in 1674, the letters of Vincenzo Armanni, of Gubbio, were printed at Macerata, just five years after November 1669, when we hear our last tidings of de la Cloche. Mr. Maziere Brady quotes the letter of Armanni to 'Francesco Maria Doria [son] of Brancalone,' but gives no date of the letter.¹ Armanni says nothing of the Jesuit novice, James de la Cloche. He does say that Prince James Stuart, son of Charles II., went to Naples for his health, and that (from other evidences) occurred just after James de la Cloche returned from London to Rome, in December 1668, or January 1669, with the intention of instantly returning to London. With Prince James was a French knight, a Hospitaler. *He* went on to Malta; Prince James remained in Naples. He chose as his confessor a parish priest, recommended to him by the Chevalier. The priest, later, told the whole story, which follows, to Armanni. It seems good evidence.

* * *

A queer story it is! There was at Naples a poor but honest Signor Corona, whose wife and daughter, Teresa, a very pretty girl, prayed in church every Friday for Teresa's happy settle-

¹ *Anglo-Roman Papers*, Gardner, Paisley, 1890.

ment in life. The priest alone knew who the Prince really was. He sent Prince James to lodge with Signor Corona, and there he laid himself and his royal chances at the feet of Teresa, as in a fairy-tale. She modestly declined, and the parish priest disapproved of the Prince's proposal. James took another confessor, and showed him the letter of Queen Christina. If he did, the new confessor knew him for a runaway Jesuit novice. However, the confessor induced Teresa to accept the Prince, who gave his needy future father-in-law a lot of money. And where did he get money? Corona blabbed and bragged, and the public regarded Prince James as certainly a swindler, probably a coiner. However, he assuredly wedded Teresa in public, in February 1669. The attesting documents are extant.

* *

The Viceroy of Naples, hearing the tattle, pounced on Prince James, who produced the certificates of his royal birth. But he was detained as a prisoner of State till the Viceroy could get intelligence from England. 'Immediately on the arrival of the answer from London, the Prince was set at liberty, and left Naples.' He came back in a few months, with 50,000 scudi, and meant to take his wife and her family to Venice. But he died, leaving a will, in which he said that he was the son of Charles II. and of Lady Maria Henrietta Stuart. He modestly asked Charles II. to give his unborn son 'the principality of Wales, or of Monmouth,' and an income of 100,000 crowns. Other princely commands and bequests he made, and ended very piously.

* *

This story, remember, was written in 1669-1674, and was given on the authority of the Prince's confessor, the friend of Teresa Corona. But, unknown to Mr. Brady, there is quite another story. It was sent to the English Government by Kent, the English agent at Rome, in letters of March, June, August, and September, 1669, with Roman newsletters of similar dates. These letters are now in our Record Office. According to Kent, in January 1669 a young stranger married the daughter of a Neapolitan innkeeper. He was very flush of gold, 'jewels, and pistoles,' and the talk went that he was of the English royal family. The Viceroy laid hands on the bridegroom, who appealed to the British consul, but the consul could not understand the case or find any proof of the claims. Early in June, the Viceroy

received a letter from Charles II. He did *not* (as Armanni says) release the prisoner, but proclaimed him an impostor, intended for him the compliment of a public whipping, and locked him up in the Vicaria, the common prison, among the lowest scoundrels. But the bridegroom was let off the flogging, nay, he was released from gaol—a very extraordinary circumstance. Why should a proclaimed impostor, who published a slander against a crowned head, be let loose on the world? So it was, in any case. The man disappeared, came back to Naples, said he had visited France to see his mother in Paris, and found that she had died. She was, he said, Lady Mary Henrietta Stuart, of the house of the Barons of St. Mars, or San Marzio, obviously the Earls of March, a title in the House of Lennox. Mr. Brady says: 'In 1646 (as Sir Bernard Burke kindly informed the writer), Charles Stuart, sixth Duke of Lennox in Scotland, and third Duke of Richmond in England, was fourth Earl of March.' This is not quite so. The only traceable Mary Stuart, in the Lennox family, was daughter of the fourth Duke of Lennox, and died in 1667, aged eighteen, being the wife of the Earl of Arran (Butler). She could not possibly have been a mother in 1646, being still unborn when her father was only thirty-four years of age. After making a will containing this statement, the Prince James Stuart died on August 26, 1669. Lord Acton, in the review cited, and Mr. A. Francis Steuart, in the *English Historical Review*, July 1903, may be consulted for the facts. Neither of them refers to the account quoted by Mr. Brady from Armanni's letters, nor does Mr. Brady refer to the contemporary letters of Kent from Rome. These are perhaps worse evidence than that of Armanni and the Neapolitan parish priest.

• • •

Who, then, was Prince James Stuart? Had James de la Cloche abandoned everything for love of Teresa Corona? Or was Prince James Armanni's Cavalier of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, who, in that case, never went to Malta, but cut de la Cloche's throat, stole his jewels and money, and set up as a son of Charles II.? But de la Cloche had only Oliva's 800*l.*, and, as far as we know, no jewels. Again, James left his certificates of royal birth at Rome, with the Jesuits. Without them, neither he nor his murderer could make out any royal claims. Again, though James Stuart, whoever he was, had most important royal secrets, and could have revealed the story of de la Cloche's secret missions

and of the English King's intended conversion, James Stuart was let loose on the world. His posthumous child bore the name of *Rovano Stuardo*; *Rovano* or *Ruano* is *de Rohan*, and *Henri de Rohan* was the name under which James *de la Cloche* travelled to meet Charles II. in October 1668. James Stuart was thus in the centre of that most secret, and to Charles most perilous, adventure, the public knowledge of which, Charles wrote, would lead to revolution and to his own death. Yet James Stuart was turned loose with his budget of secrets, whether James was *de la Cloche*—rendered reckless by sudden love of Miss *Corona*—or whether he had robbed, perhaps killed, *de la Cloche*. In either case, nay, in any conceivable case, he deserved to be silenced by death or dungeon. In France he would have been a masked prisoner for life. But he went free, and stereotyped his story in a will, of which the Record Office possesses a partial copy, with Kent's letters on the matter from Rome. 'A mystery was always just nuts to Tom Sawyer,' and, in case other people share Tom's tastes, I offer this very imperfect sketch of a puzzle which I hope to attack with fuller information. I wrote something on the matter elsewhere before I knew as much of it as I do now.

* * *

I confess myself wholly puzzled as to whether James Stuart was *de la Cloche*. According to Charles's letters, his son was eminently pious and unworldly, and had made distinguished studies in Holland. We have seen how poor he was when he joined the Jesuits. He was so much attached to them that he begged Charles to pay them a large sum for their new buildings. He was regarded with much affection by the King, and was employed in matters of crucial importance and perilous consequence. It is most unlikely that, in 1669, he was allowed to leave Rome with only a lay companion: the rule required that he should be attended by a Jesuit, though in August 1668, Charles asked for a relaxation of the law. 'Love is a great master,' but could it so suddenly upset *de la Cloche's* character, and make him invent a noble mother, who never existed? The alleged father of his mother could only be the *Lennox* who, in 1646, was but thirty-four. *Lennox's* brothers were too young to be fathers of a marriageable Lady Mary at that date. The genuine *de la Cloche* could hardly have invented the absurdities of the will of James Stuart. But there are points on the other side.

* * *

In a recent novel, an attempt is made to throw doubt on the illegitimacy of the Duke of Monmouth, and a question is asked about it in *Notes and Queries*. But Charles's letter to de la Cloche of August 1668 proves that he regarded Monmouth as illegitimate, for he is said to have a worse claim, as younger, and not of a noble mother, than de la Cloche himself. The King could not have said this had he married Lucy Waters or Walters, Monmouth's mother. Lord Acton and Father Florent Dumas conceive that de la Cloche may have written the two theological papers in French, of which Charles II. left copies in his own hand. They are familiar in tone, and refer to previous oral discussions. But before 1668 Charles was intellectually a convert to Catholicism, as we know on abundant evidence. He did not need converting, but the two papers, whoever was their author, are addressed to a person who does need conversion, does need intellectual assurance that truth is only to be found in the Church of Rome. That was already the King's private opinion, and there was no need, in 1668, for the exposition of such arguments. What his Majesty needed was exhortation on common honesty, of which his letters to Oliva are absurdly deficient, he expecting the great Jesuit to tell whatever lies may be convenient. It is a queer affair, granting the authenticity of the papers, which appears to be beyond dispute.

* * *

Readers of Mr. Dale Owen's *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* may remember a curious tale of the Poltergeist, or noisy fiend who throws things about. Mr. Owen got it from Mrs. Crowe's *Night Side of Nature*, and she, in Edinburgh, from a Mr. Lothian, unnamed by her, but named by Mr. Owen. In 1835, a Mr. Webster, of Trinity, near Edinburgh, owned two houses, detached from other houses, but having only a partition wall. He let one house to Captain Molesworth, and himself lived in the other. All went well till the Captain's house was beset by a common Poltergeist, which, in addition to other feats, made the most intolerable noises. The Captain tore up floors, and pierced walls, and fired pistols in the attempt to discover the human being whom he suspected of causing the troubles. He even broke through the partition into Mr. Webster's dwelling. Mr. Webster brought an action to prevent the Captain from thus destroying his property and invading his domestic seclusion; he blamed a daughter of the gallant officer's, an invalid girl of about fourteen summers.

Inflexible in experiment, the Captain tied the child up in a bag, but the *vacarme* persisted.

* . *

The case, say my authors, was heard in the Sheriff's Court in Edinburgh. On reading this I made inquiries as to whether a record of the affair existed in the business papers of the late Mr. Lothian. A search made, with great kindness, by the gentleman in whose hands they are, discovered—nothing. I conceived that Mrs. Crowe had invented the whole affair. But the seeker was not foiled. He consulted the Ledger of 1835, and, under B, found that instructions as to the case came to Mr. Lothian from Messrs. Boyd, Writers to the Signet. At the Sheriff Clerk's office, it seemed that 'the process had not been extracted,' and it appears that unextracted processes of that distant date are no longer in existence. To make room by destroying old papers is the natural tendency of the human mind, to which we owe great gaps in history.

* . *

The case of Webster *v.* Molesworth, at all events, was fought desperately, and no wonder, Mr. Webster battling for his house, and the Captain for leave to destroy it in the search for the unknown agent who disturbed his repose. One hearing alone occupied ten hours of one day. If we only had the evidence it would be of the first curiosity. Mr. Lothian, for Captain Molesworth, prepared minutes which covered thirty-four sheets of paper! The battle raged from the end of 1835 to the end of 1837. I am not apt to believe that a little girl could produce, fraudulently, disturbances important enough to cause such prolonged proceedings. Captains of determined character are not so easily deluded by their offspring. Possibly the Edinburgh newspapers of the day recorded something of this extraordinary law-suit; in them was my last hope, *spes ultima et exigua*. They were drawn blank.

* . *

This year I never saw a rise of trout at mayfly, that pretty spectacle. But, on a Sunday night, at the end of July, I did witness a wonderful rise of sea-trout. The air was all of silver, silver was the sea, and the withdrawing tide-water that had flooded the round pool up to its grey walls of rock crowned by Scottish firs. Beyond all were the violet hills of Morvern. The stream

bubbled with rises of sea trout, large and small, making ripples of brighter silver in the fleeting waters. And it was the evening of the Sabbath, not to mention that, had I fished, I should have broken the laws of the land, as well as of the Decalogue. In my heart, and perhaps in that of a learned prelate who beheld this vision, 'longing to be at 'em,' arose a timid sympathy with Anarchism! After all, it would have been a shame to take the happy trout out of such a blissful place, beneath the house where Allan Breck, at three in a May morning, came with the tidings that the Red Fox was shot—he was not asked 'by whom?'

* * *

The authentic tradition of the country is that as Campbell of Glenure rode from Fort William to his doom, there were Camerons with guns behind many a rock and bush in Lochaber. But they never got a fair shot at him, so near him were his companions. On crossing the ferry at Ballachulish, he said, 'I am safe, now I am out of my mother's country,' his mother being a Cameron. But Allan Breck and, they say, Somebody else were lurking for him in the wood of Lettermore, whereby the new railway runs now, in a very grubby and unlovely manner, my malison on the same.

* * *

Let the holiday traveller into Scotland procure, if he can, a calendar of Scottish public holidays, and avoid journeying while they endure. 'Glasgow Fair' takes up about ten days at the end of July. To be involved with the trippers, either as their tide ebbs out of or flows back to Glasgow, is evil fortune. I was caught in the rush from Oban, when the train was an hour and three-quarters late, making it futile to hope to establish connections with a train leaving Edinburgh. Our monstrous convoy swung in prodigious curves among the winding passes, like a noisy 'dragon of the prime,' and the dragon had to make two stops at each little station. First people got in or out near the head, and, stopping again, passengers in the tail had the same convenience. They were all sober, and all were good-humoured, the smiles of the sony lasses extended to leagues. But, if a man has to catch a train at the other end, the experience is most undesirable. To-day is Dundee holidays, and, by the way of a treat, the fair populace of Dundee is trudging under the rain, and staring into the windows of the *modistes* of St. Andrews. They must have quite as good in

bonny Dundee, but they seem happy in their innocent hearts. Hence an excellent moral may be extracted; still, one would rather not be a voyager when the large Scottish towns send forth their thousands. A holiday calendar ought to be added by Mr. Bradshaw to his useful time-tables, unless, indeed, all days are the holidays of one big town or another. If so we must take

Close-lipped Patience for our only friend,
Sad Patience, too near neighbour of Despair.

ANDREW LANG.

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